L'AIGLON

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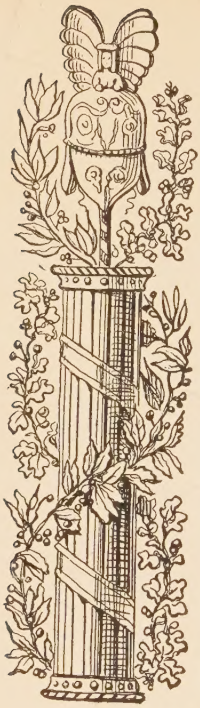

L'AIGLON

Sarony

L'AIGLON

A PLAY IN SIX ACTS

BY

EDMOND ROSTAND

TRANSLATED BY

LOUIS N. PARKER

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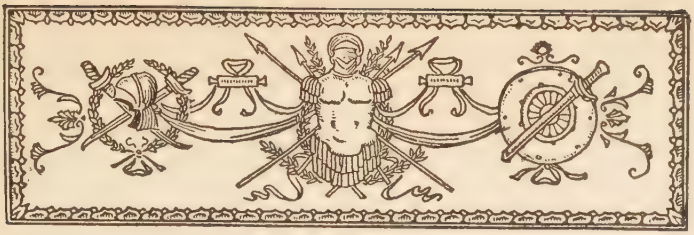
By Robert Howard Russell



THE PERSONS OF THE PLAY

The cast as presented by Maude Adams at the Knickerbocker Theatre, New York, October, 1900

THE DUKE OF REICHSTADT, *son of Napoleon I. and the Archduchess Maria Louisa of Austria* — MAUDE ADAMS

FLAMBEAU, *a veteran* — J. H. GILMOUR

PRINCE METTERNICH, *Chancellor of Austria* — EDWIN ARDEN

COUNT PROKESCH — PERCY LYNDALL

BARON FRIEDRICH VON GENTZ — EUGENE JEPSON

THE ATTACHÉ OF THE FRENCH EMBASSY *at the Austrian Court* — OSWALD YORK

THE TAILOR, *a conspirator* — WILLIAM LEWERS

COUNT MAURICE DIETRICHSTEIN — EDWARD LESTER

BARON VON OBENAUS — R. PEYTON CARTER

THE EMPEROR FRANCIS OF AUSTRIA — JOS. FRANCŒUR

MARSHAL MARMONT, *Duke of Ragusa* — J. H. BENRIMO

COUNT SEDLNIZKY, *Prefect of the Austrian Police* — WILLIAM CROSBY

THE MARQUIS OF BOMBELLES, *betrothed to Maria Louisa* — CLAYTON LEGGE

TIBURTIUS DE LOGET — WILLIAM IRVING

LORD COWLEY, *English Ambassador at the Austrian Court* — RIENZI DE CORDOVA

COUNT SANDOR — EDWARD JACOBS

DOCTOR MALFATTI — H. D. JAMES

GENERAL HARTMAN — HERBERT CARR

CAPTAIN FORESTI — JOHN S. ROBERTSON

AN AUSTRIAN SERGEANT — LLOYD CARLETON

A Country Doctor.....Frederick Spencer
His Son.....Byron Ongley
Thalberg.....B. B. Belcher
Montenegro.....Morton H. Weldon
The Chamberlain.....Charles Martin
An Officer of the Noble Guard, *the Emperor of Austria's Bodyguard*.....Henry P. Davis
The Marquis of Otranto, *son of Fouche*
Charles Henderson

Goubeaux..	*Bonapartist conspirators*	....Don C. Merrifield
Pionnet....		.....Henry Clarke
Morchain..		...Thomas H. Elwood
Guibert....		.....George Klein
Borowski...		.....Frank Goodman

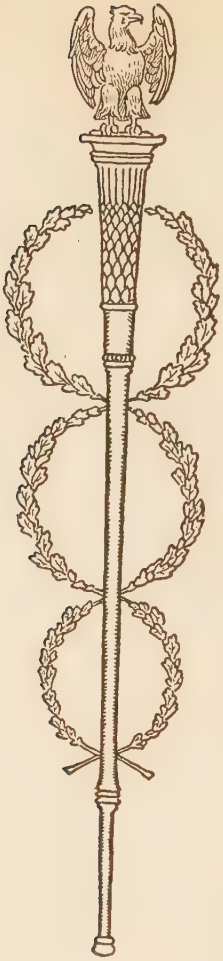
First Police Officer.....Ralph Yoerg
First Archduke, *a child*.....Walter Butterworth
Second Archduke, *a child*.....John Leeman
Maria Louisa, *second wife of Napoleon I., widow of Count Neipperg*.....Ida Waterman
The Archduchess Sophia of Austria
Sarah Converse
Theresa de Loget, *sister of Tiburtius de Loget*
Ellie Collmer
The Countess Napoleone Camerata, *daughter of Napoleon's sister, Elisa Bacciocchi*...Sarah Perry
Fanny Elssler.....Margaret Gordon
Scarampi, *Mistress of the Robes*...Francis Comstock
Mina, *a maid-of-honor*.....Edith Scott
An Archduchess, *a child*.....Beatrice Morrison

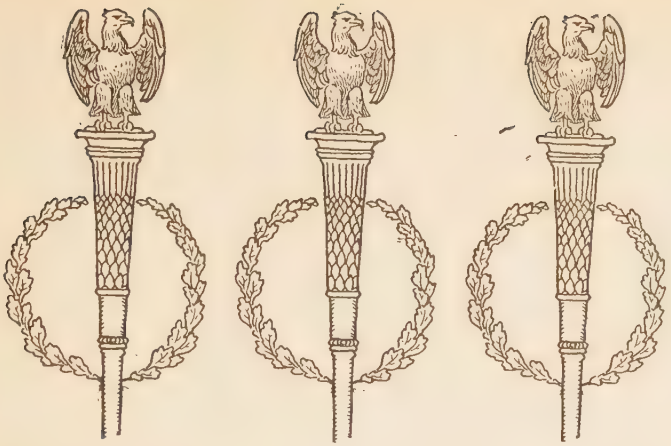
Princes, Princesses, Archdukes, Archduchesses, Maids-of-Honor, Officers, Noble Guard, Masks (Male and Female), Crotian Peasants, Hungarian Peasants, Austrian Soldiers, Police Officers.

The period covered by the play is from 1830 to 1832.

THE DUKE OF REICHSTADT
FROM THE PAINTING BY SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE

THE FIRST ACT





L'AIGLON

THE FIRST ACT

At Baden, near Vienna, in 1830.

The drawing-room of the villa occupied by MARIA LOUISA. *The walls are painted al fresco in bright colors. The frieze is decorated with a design of sphinxes.*

At the back, between two other windows, a window reaching to the ground and forming the entrance from the garden. Beyond, the balustrade of the terrace leading into the garden; a glimpse of lindens and pine-trees. A magnificent day in the beginning of September. Empire furniture of lemon-wood decorated with bronze. A large china stove in the centre of the wall on the left. In front of it a door. On the right, two doors. The first leads to the apartments of MARIA LOUISA. *In front of the window on the left at the back an Erard piano of the period, and a harp. A big table on the right, and against the right wall a small table with*

shelves filled with books. On the left, facing the audience, a Récamier couch, and a large stand for candlesticks. A great many flowers in vases. Framed engravings on the walls representing the members of the Imperial Family of Austria. A portrait of the Emperor Francis.

At the rise of the curtain a group of elegant ladies is discovered at the further end of the room. Two of them are seated at the piano, with their backs to the audience, playing a duet. Another is at the harp. They are playing at sight, amid much laughter and many interruptions. A lackey ushers in a modestly dressed young girl who is accompanied by an officer of the Austrian Cavalry. Seeing that no one notices their entrance, these two remain standing a moment in a corner. The COUNT DE BOMBELLES *comes in from the door on the right and goes toward the piano. He sees the young girl, and stops, with a smile.*

THE LADIES.

[*Surrounding the piano, laughing, and all talking at the same time.*]

SHE misses all the flats!—It's scandalous!—
I'll take the bass!—Loud pedal!—One! Two!—
Harp!

BOMBELLES.

[*To* THERESA.]
What! You!

THERESA.

Good-day, my Lord Bombelles!

A LADY.

[*At the piano.*]

Mi, sol.

THERESA.

I enter on my readership—

ANOTHER LADY.

[*At the piano.*]

The flats!

THERESA.

It's thanks to you.

BOMBELLES.

My dear Theresa! Nothing!
You are my relative, and you are French.

THERESA.

[*Presenting the officer.*]
Tiburtius—

BOMBELLES.

Ah, your brother!

[*He gives him his hand and pushes forward a chair for* THERESA.]

Take a seat.

THERESA.

I'm very nervous.

BOMBELLES.

[*With a smile.*]

Heavens! What about?

THERESA.

To venture near the persons of the two
The Emperor left!

BOMBELLES.

Oh, is that all, my child?

TIBURTIUS.

Our people hated Bonaparte of old—

THERESA.

Yes—but to see—

BOMBELLES.

His widow?

THERESA.

And perhaps
His son?

BOMBELLES.

Assuredly.

THERESA.

Why, it would mean
I'd never thought or read, and was not French,
Nor born in recent years, if I could stand
Unmoved so near them. Is she lovely?

BOMBELLES.

Who?

THERESA.

Her Majesty of Parma?

BOMBELLES.

Why—

THERESA.

She's sad
And that itself is beauty.

BOMBELLES.

But I'm puzzled.
Surely you've seen her?

THERESA.

No.

TIBURTIUS.

We've just come in.

BOMBELLES.

Yes, but—

TIBURTIUS.

We feared we might disturb these ladies
Whose laughter sings new gamuts to the piano.

THERESA.

Here in my corner I await her notice.

BOMBELLES.

What? Why, it's she who's playing bass this moment!

THERESA.

The Emp—?

BOMBELLES.

I'll go and tell her.

[*He goes to the piano and whispers to one of the ladies who are playing.*]

MARIA LOUISA.

[*Turning.*]

Ah! this child—
Quite a pathetic story—yes—you told me:
A brother—

BOMBELLES.

Father exiled. Son an exile.

TIBURTIUS.

The Austrian uniform is to my taste;
And then there's fox-hunting, which I adore.

MARIA LOUISA.

[*To* THERESA.]
So that's the rascal whose extravagance
Eats up your little fortune?

THERESA.

Oh!—my brother—

MARIA LOUISA.

The wretch has ruined you, but you forgive him!
Theresa de Loget, I think you're charming!

[*She takes* THERESA *by both hands and makes her sit beside her on the couch.*]

[BOMBELLES and TIBURTIUS *retire to the back.*

Now you're among my ladies. I may boast
I'm not unpleasant; rather sad at times
Since—

THERESA.

I am grieved beyond the power of words.

MARIA LOUISA.

Yes, to be sure. It was a grievous loss.
That lovely soul was little known!

THERESA.

Oh, surely!

MARIA LOUISA.

[*Turning to* BOMBELLES.]
I've just been writing; they're to keep his horse—
[*To* THERESA.]
Since the dear General's death—

THERESA.

The—General's?

MARIA LOUISA.

He'd kept that title.

THERESA.

Ah, I understand!

MARIA LOUISA.

I weep.

THERESA.

That title was his greatest glory.

MARIA LOUISA.

One cannot know at first all one has lost;
And I lost all when General Neipperg died.

THERESA.

Neipperg?

MARIA LOUISA.

I came to Baden for distraction.
It's nice. So near Vienna.—Ah, my dear,
My nerves are troublesome; they say I'm thinner—
And growing very like Madame de Berry.
'Twas Vitrolles said so. Now I do my hair

Like her. Why did not Heaven take me too?
This villa's small, of course; but 'tisn't bad;
Metternich is our guest in passing.
[*She points to the door on the left.*]
There.
He leaves to-night. The life at Baden's gay.
We have the Sandors and the pianist Thalberg,
And Montenegro sings to us in Spanish.
Fontana howls an air from *Figaro.*
The wife of the Ambassador of England
And the Archduchess come; we go for drives—
But nothing soothes my grief!—Ah, could the General—!
Of course you're coming to the ball to-night?

THERESA.

Why—

MARIA LOUISA.

At the Meyendorffs'. Strauss will be there.
She must be present, mustn't she, Bombelles?

THERESA.

May I solicit of your Majesty
News of the Duke of Reichstadt?

MARIA LOUISA.

In good health.
He coughs a little; but the air of Baden
Is good for him. He's quite a man. He's reached
The critical hour of entrance in the world!
Oh dear! when I consider he's already
Lieutenant-Colonel! Think how grieved I am
Never to have seen him in his uniform!
[*Enter the* DOCTOR *and his son, bringing a box.*

MARIA LOUISA.

Ah! These must be for him!

THE DOCTOR.

Yes; the collections.

MARIA LOUISA.

Please put them down.

BOMBELLES.

What are they?

THE DOCTOR.

Butterflies.

THERESA.

Butterflies?

MARIA LOUISA.

Yes; when I was visiting
This amiable old man, the local doctor,
I saw his boy arranging these collections.
I sighed aloud, Alas! would but my son,
Whom nothing moves, take interest in these!

THE DOCTOR.

So then I answered, Well, your Majesty,
One never knows. Why not? We can but try;
I'll bring my butterflies!

THERESA.

His butterflies!

MARIA LOUISA.

Could he but leave his solitary musings
To occupy his mind with—

THE DOCTOR.

Lepidoptera.

MARIA LOUISA.

Leave them; come back; he's out at present.
[*To* THERESA.] You
Come, I'll present you to Scarampi. She's
The Mistress of the Robes.
[*She sees* METTERNICH, *who enters L.*]
Ah, Metternich!
Dear Prince, we leave you the saloon.

METTERNICH.

Indeed,
I had to come here to receive the Envoy—

MARIA LOUISA.

I know—

METTERNICH.

Of General Belliard, French Ambassador;
And Councillor Gentz, and several Estafets.
With your permission—
[*To a lackey.*] First, Baron von Gentz.

MARIA LOUISA.

The room is yours.

[*She goes out with* THERESA. TIBURTIUS *and* BOMBELLES *follow her.* GENTZ *enters.*]

METTERNICH.

Good-morning, Gentz. You know
The Emperor recalls me to Vienna?
I'm going back to-day.

GENTZ.

Ah?

METTERNICH.

Yes; it's tiresome—
The town in summer!

GENTZ.

Empty as my pocket.

METTERNICH.

Oh, come now! No offence, you know, but—eh?
Surely the Russian Government has—

GENTZ.

Me!

METTERNICH.

Be frank. Who's bought you? Eh?

GENTZ.

[*Munching sweetmeats.*]

The highest bidder.

METTERNICH.

Where does the money go?

GENTZ.

[*Smelling at a scent-bottle he has taken out of his pocket.*]

In riotous living.

METTERNICH.

Good Heavens! And you're considered my right hand!

GENTZ.

Let not your left know what your right receives.

METTERNICH.

Sweetmeats and perfumes! Oh!

GENTZ.

Why, yes, of course.
I've money; I love sweets and perfumes. Yes,
I'm a depraved old baby.

METTERNICH.

Affectation!
Mere pose of self-contempt.
[*Suddenly.*] And Fanny?

GENTZ.

Elssler? Won't love me. I'm ridiculous
From every point of view. She loves the Duke.
I'm but a screen; but I'm content to suffer
When I remember how it serves the state
If he's amused. And so I play the fool,
And dance attendance on the little dancer.
She bade me bring her here this very night,
Just to surprise the Duke.

METTERNICH.
You scandalize me.

GENTZ.
His mother's going out. There's dancing.
[*He hands* METTERNICH *a letter which he has taken out of a pocket-book.*]
Read—
From Fouché's son.

METTERNICH.
[*Reading the letter.*] August the twentieth,
Eighteen hundred and thirty—

GENTZ.
He'd transform—

METTERNICH.
Good Viscount of Otranto!

GENTZ.
Our Duke of Reichstadt to Napoleon Two.

METTERNICH.
[*Handing back the letter.*]
A list of partisans?

GENTZ.
Yes.

METTERNICH.
Make a note.

GENTZ.
Do we refuse?

METTERNICH.
Without destroying hope.
Ah, but my little Colonel serves me well
To keep these Frenchmen straight. When they forget
Their Metternich, and lean too much to the left,
I let him show his nose out of his box, and—crack!—
When they come right, I pop him in again!

GENTZ.

When can one see the springs work?

METTERNICH.

Now.

[*Enter the French* ATTACHÉ.

METTERNICH.

The Envoy
Of General Belliard. Welcome, sir.
[*Hands him papers.*] The papers.
We accept in principle King Louis Philip;
But don't let's have too much of '99,
Or we might crack a little egg-shell!

THE ATTACHÉ.

Sir,
Are you alluding to Prince Francis Charles?

METTERNICH.

The Duke of Reichstadt? Oh, sir, as for me,
I don't admit his father reigned.

THE ATTACHÉ.

[*Generously.*]

I do.

METTERNICH.

So I'll do nothing for the Duke. Yet—

THE ATTACHÉ.

Yet?

METTERNICH.

Yet, should you give too loose a reign to freedom,
Permit yourself the slightest propaganda,
Let Monsieur Royer-Collard come too often
And bare his bosom to your king; in short,
If your new kingdom's too republican,
We might—our temper's not angelical—
We might remember Francis is our grandson.

THE ATTACHÉ.

Our lilies never shall turn red.

METTERNICH.

And while
They keep their whiteness bees shall not approach them.

THE ATTACHÉ.

'Tis feared in spite of you the Duke may hope.

METTERNICH.

No.

THE ATTACHÉ.

Things are happening.

METTERNICH.

But we filter them.

THE ATTACHÉ.

Doesn't he know that France has changed her king?

METTERNICH.

Yes; but the detail he does not yet know
Is that his father's flag, the tricolor,
Is re-established. 'Twill be time enough—

THE ATTACHÉ.

He would be drunk with hope!

METTERNICH.

We'll keep him sober.

THE ATTACHÉ.

He's not so strictly guarded here at Baden.

METTERNICH.

Oh, here there's nought to fear. He's with his mother.

THE ATTACHÉ.

Well, sir?

METTERNICH.

What spy could have such interest
In watching him? For any plot would trouble
Her lovely calm.

THE ATTACHÉ.

Is not that calmness feigned?
She cannot have a thought but for her eaglet!

MARIA LOUISA.

[*Entering hurriedly.*

My parrot!

THE ATTACHÉ.

[*Starting.*]

Eh?

MARIA LOUISA.

[*To* METTERNICH.]

Margharitina's flown!

METTERNICH.

Oh!

MARIA LOUISA.

My parrot, Margharitina!

METTERNICH.

[*To the* ATTACHÉ.]

There, sir!

THE ATTACHÉ.

[*To* MARIA LOUISA.]

May I not seek it, Highness?

MARIA LOUISA.

[*Curtly.*]

No. [*She goes out.*

THE ATTACHÉ.

[*To* METTERNICH.]

What's wrong?

METTERNICH.

We say, Your Majesty; you called her Highness.

THE ATTACHÉ.

But if we don't allow the Emperor reigned
She cannot be addressed as Majesty
Except as Parma's Duchess—

METTERNICH.

That's her title.

THE ATTACHÉ.

Then that was why she looked such daggers at me!

METTERNICH.

Question of protocols and of precedence.

THE ATTACHÉ.

[*Preparing to take his leave.*]
May the French Embassy from this day forward
Display the tricolor cockade?

METTERNICH.

[*With a sigh.*] Of course,
Since we're agreed—

[*Seeing the* ATTACHÉ *silently throw away the white cockade which was on his hat and replace it with a tricolor which he takes out of his pocket.*]

Come, come! You lose no time!

[*Noise of harness-bells without.*]

METTERNICH.

What is it now?

GENTZ.

[*Who is on the terrace.*]
The guests of the Archduke.
The Meyendorffs, Lord Cowley, Thalberg—

BOMBELLES.

[*Who has quickly come in R. at the sound of the bells, followed by* TIBURTIUS.]

Meet them!

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

[*Appearing on the threshold surrounded by a crowd of lords and ladies in elegant summer costumes.* (*Light dresses and parasols; large*

hats.) Two little boys and a little girl dressed in the latest fashion.]

'Tis but a villa; not a palace.

[*The room is crowded. She turns to a young man.*]

Quick!

Thalberg, my Tarantelle!

[THALBERG *sits at the piano and plays.*]

[*To* METTERNICH.] Where is her Majesty,
My lovely sister?

A LADY.

We looked in to fetch her.

ANOTHER LADY.

We're rushing through the valley on a coach.
Sandor is driving.

A MAN'S VOICE.

We must thrust the lava
Back in its crater!

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Oh! do hold your tongues
They will insist on talking of volcanoes.

BOMBELLES.

What's this volcano?

A LADY.

[*To another.*]

Astrachan this winter.

SÁNDOR.

[*To* BOMBELLES.]
Why, liberal opinions.

BOMBELLES.

Ah!

LORD COWLEY.

Or, rather, France!

METTERNICH.

[*To the* ATTACHÉ.]
You hear him?

A LADY.

[*To a young man.*]
Montenegro, sing to me
Under your breath, for me alone.

MONTENEGRO.

[*Whom* THALBERG *accompanies, sings very softly.*]
Corazon—

[*He continues, pianissimo.*]

ANOTHER LADY.

[*To* GENTZ.]
Ah, Gentz!
[*She dips into her reticule.*]
Some bon-bons, Gentz?
[*She gives him some.*]

GENTZ.

You are an angel.

ANOTHER LADY.

[*Similar business.*]
Perfume from Paris?
[*She takes out a little bottle of scent and gives it to him.*]

METTERNICH.

[*Hurriedly to* GENTZ.]
Tear the label off!
"The Reichstadt scent"!

GENTZ.

[*Smelling perfume.*]
It smells of violets.

METTERNICH.

[*Snatches the bottle out of his hand and scrapes the label off with a pair of scissors he takes from the table.*]

If the Duke came he'd see that still at Paris—

A VOICE.

[*Among the group at the back of the stage.*]

The Hydra lifts its head—

A LADY.

Our husbands talk

Of Hydras!

LORD COWLEY.

And it must be stifled.

A LADY.

Yes;

Volcanoes first, then hydras.

A MAID OF HONOR OF MARIA LOUISA.

[*Followed by a servant bringing a tray with large glasses of iced coffee.*]

Eis-Kaffee?

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

[*Seated; to a young lady.*]

Recite some verses, Olga.

GENTZ.

May we have

Something of Heine's?

SEVERAL VOICES.

Yes!

OLGA.

[*Rising.*]

The Grenadiers?

METTERNICH.

[*Quickly.*]
Oh! No!

SCARAMPI.

[*Coming out of* MARIA LOUISA'S *apartment.*]
Her Majesty is on her way!

ALL.

Scarampi!

SANDOR.

We'll drive out to Krainerhütten,
The ladies there can rest upon the green.

METTERNICH.

[*To* GENTZ.]
What are you reading yonder?

GENTZ.

The "Debats."

LORD COWLEY.

The politics?

GENTZ.

The Theatres.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

How futile!

GENTZ.

Guess what they're playing at the Vaudeville.

METTERNICH.

Well?

GENTZ.

"Bonaparte."

METTERNICH.

[*With indifference.*]
Oh?

GENTZ.

The Nouveautés?

METTERNICH.

Well?

GENTZ.

"Bonaparte." And the Variétés?
"Napoleon." The Luxembourg announces
"Fourteen years of his life." At the Gymnase
They are reviving the "Return from Russia."
What is the Gaiety to play this season?
"Napoleon's Coachman" and "La Malmaison."
An unknown author's done "Saint Helena."
The Porte-Saint-Martin's going to produce
"Napoleon."

LORD COWLEY.

It's the fashion.

TIBURTIUS.

It's the rage.

GENTZ.

The Ambigu "Murat;" the Cirque "The Emperor."

SANDOR.

A fashion.

BOMBELLES.

Yes, a fashion.

GENTZ.

Yes, a fashion
Which will recur from time to time in France.

A LADY.

[*Reading the paper over* GENTZ'S *shoulder through a long-handled eye-glass.*]
They want to bring his ashes home.

METTERNICH.

The Phœnix
May rise again, but not the eagle.

TIBURTIUS.

What
An unknown quantity is France!

METTERNICH.

Oh, no;
I've gauged it.

A LADY.

Well, then, mighty prophet, speak!

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

His words are graven in bronze.

GENTZ.

Or, maybe, zinc.

LORD COWLEY.

Who will be France's Saviour?

METTERNICH.

Henry the Fifth.
The others—Fashion.

THERESA.

That's a useful name
For calling glory by at times.

METTERNICH.

So long
As all the shouting's only done in theatres,
I think there's no—

CRIES.

[*Without.*]

Long live Napoleon!

ALL.

What?—Here, at Baden!—Here!

METTERNICH.

Ridiculous!
Pray, have no fear!

LORD COWLEY.

We must not lose our heads
Because a name is shouted.

GENTZ.

He is dead.

TIBURTIUS.

[*On the terrace.*]
It's nothing.

METTERNICH.

Yes, but what?

TIBURTIUS.

An Austrian soldier.

METTERNICH.

Austrian?

TIBURTIUS.

Two of them. I saw them.

METTERNICH.

Vexing!

MARIA LOUISA.

[*Entering hurriedly and pale with fear from her room.*]
Did you not hear the shout? Oh, horrible!
It brought to mind—One day the people surged
About my coach in Parma with that cry!
It's done to vex me!

METTERNICH.

What could it have meant?

TIBURTIUS.

Two of the Duke of Reichstadt's regiment
Caught sight of him as he was riding homeward.
You know the deep ditch bordering the road?
His Highness wished to leap it, but his horse
Shied, swerved, and backed. The Duke sat firm,
And brought him to it again, and—over! Then
The men, to applaud him, shouted. And that's all.

METTERNICH.

[*To a lackey.*]
Fetch one of them at once!

MARIA LOUISA.

They seek my death!
[*An Austrian sergeant is brought in.*]

METTERNICH.

A sergeant! Now, my man, speak up. What meant
That shouting?

THE SERGEANT.

I don't know.

METTERNICH.

What! You don't know?

THE SERGEANT.

No; nor downstairs the corporal don't know neither.
He shouted with me. It was good to see
The Prince so young and slender on his horse.
And then we're proud of having for our Colonel
The son of—

METTERNICH.

That'll do.

THE SERGEANT.

He took the ditch
So cool and calm! As pretty as a picture!
So then a sort of lump came in our throats,
Pride and affection—I don't know—we shouted
"Long live—!

METTERNICH.

Enough, enough! It's just as easy
To shout "Long live the Duke of Reichstadt," idiot!

THE SERGEANT.

Well—

METTERNICH.
What?

THE SERGEANT.
"Long live the Duke of Reichstadt"
Isn't so easy as "Long live—"

METTERNICH.
Be off.
Don't shout at all!

TIBURTIUS.
[*To the* SERGEANT *as he passes him to go out.*]
You fool!

MARIA LOUISA.
[*To the ladies who surround her.*]
I'm better, thank you.

THERESA.
The Empress!

MARIA LOUISA.
[*To* DIETRICHSTEIN, *pointing to* THERESA.]
Baron Dietrichstein, this is
My new companion-reader.
[*To* THERESA, *presenting* DIETRICHSTEIN.]
My son's tutor.
And, by the way, I've never thought of asking—
Do you read well?

TIBURTIUS.
Oh, very!

THERESA.
I don't know.

MARIA LOUISA.
Take one of Franz's books from yonder table,
Open it anywhere.

THERESA.

[*Taking a book and reading the title.*]

"Andromache"—

[*She reads.*]

"What is this fear, my lord, which strikes the heart?
Has any Trojan hero slipped his chains?
Their hate of Hector is not yet appeased:
They dread his son! fit object of their dread!
A hapless child, who is not yet aware
His master's Pyrrhus and his father Hector."

[*General embarrassment.*]

I—

GENTZ.

Charming voice.

MARIA LOUISA.

Select another passage.

THERESA.

"Alas the day, when, prompted by his valor,
To seek Achilles and to meet his doom,
He called his son and wrapped him to his heart:
'Dear wife,' quoth he, and brushed away a tear,
'I know not what the fates may have in store.
I leave my son to thee—'"

[*General embarrassment.*]

H'm—yes—

MARIA LOUISA.

Let's try
Some other volume. Take—

THERESA.

The "Meditations"?

MARIA LOUISA.

I know the author! 'Twill not be so dull.
He dined with us. [*To* SCARAMPI.] The Diplomat,
you know.

THERESA.

[*Reads.*]
" Never had hymns more strenuous and high
From seraph lips rung through the listening sky:
Courage! Oh, fallen child of godlike race—"

THE DUKE.

[*Who has entered unnoticed.*]
Forgive the interruption, Lamartine!

MARIA LOUISA.

Well, Franz? A pleasant ride?

THE DUKE.

Delightful, mother.
But, Mademoiselle, where did my entrance stop you?

THERESA.

[*Looking at him with emotion.*]
" Courage! Oh, fallen child of godlike race,
The glory of your birth is in your face!
All men who look on you—"

MARIA LOUISA.

That's quite sufficient.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

[*To the children.*]
Go, bid good morrow to your cousin.

[*The children run up to the* DUKE, *who is seated, and surround him.*]

SCARAMPI.

[*To* THERESA.]
Fie!

THERESA.

Why, what?

A LADY.

[*Looking at the* DUKE.]
How pale he is!

ANOTHER LADY.

He looks half dead!

SCARAMPI.

[*To* THERESA.]
You chose such awkward passages.

THERESA.

The book
Fell open by itself. I did not choose.

GENTZ.

[*Who has overheard.*]
Books always open where most often read.

THERESA.

[*Looking at the* DUKE.]
Archdukes upon his knees!

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

[*Leaning over the back of the* DUKE'S *chair.*]
I am delighted
To see you, Franz. I am your friend.
[*She holds out her hand to him.*]

THE DUKE.

[*Kissing her hand.*]
I know it.

GENTZ.

[*To* THERESA.]
What do you think of him? I say he's like
A cherub who had secretly read "Werther."

THE LITTLE GIRL.

[*To the* DUKE.]
How nice your collar is!

THE DUKE.

Your Highness flatters.

THERESA.

His collars!

THE LITTLE BOY.
No one has such sticks!

THE DUKE.
No. No one.

THERESA.
His sticks!

THE OTHER LITTLE BOY.
Oh! and your gloves!

THE DUKE.
Superb, my dear.

THE LITTLE GIRL.
What is your waistcoat made of?

THE DUKE.
That's cashmere.

THERESA.
Oh!

THE ARCHDUCHESS.
And you wear your nosegay—?

THE DUKE.
Latest fashion:
In the third buttonhole. So glad you noticed.
[*At this moment* THERESA *bursts into sobs.*]

THE LADIES.
Eh? What's the matter?

THERESA.
Nothing. I don't know.
Forgive me. I'm alone here—far from friends.
Oh, it was silly!—suddenly—

MARIA LOUISA.
Poor dear!

THERESA.
I held my heart in—

MARIA LOUISA.

Tears will do you good.

THE DUKE.

What's this I trod on? Why, a white cockade!

METTERNICH.

H'm!

THE DUKE.

[*To the* ATTACHÉ.]

Yours, no doubt, sir. Favor me: your hat.

[*The* ATTACHÉ *gives him his hat unwillingly. The* DUKE *sees the tricolor cockade.*]

Ah!

[*To* METTERNICH.]

I was not aware—but then—the flag?

METTERNICH.

Highness—

THE DUKE.

Is that changed, too?

METTERNICH.

A trivial detail.

THE DUKE.

Nothing.

METTERNICH.

Question of color—

THE DUKE.

Of a shade.

See for yourself. Looked at in certain lights,

I really think this is the more effective. [*He moves a few steps.*]

[*His mother takes him by the arm and leads him to the butterfly-cases, which the* DOCTOR, *who has come back, has spread out.*]

THE DUKE.

Butterflies?

MARIA LOUISA.
You admire the black one?

THE DUKE.
Charming.

THE DOCTOR.
The plants it loves are umbelliferous.

THE DUKE.
It seems to see me with its wings.

THE DOCTOR.
Those eyes?
We call them lunulæ.

THE DUKE.
Indeed? I'm glad.

THE DOCTOR.
Are you examining the spotted grey?

THE DUKE.
No, sir.

THE DOCTOR.
What then, my lord?

THE DUKE.
The pin that killed it.

THE DOCTOR.
[*To* MARIA LOUISA.]
No use.

MARIA LOUISA.
[*To* SCARAMPI.]
We'll wait. I count on the effect—

SCARAMPI.
Ah, yes!—Of our surprise.

GENTZ.
[*Who has approached the* DUKE.]
A sweetmeat?

THE DUKE.

[*Taking one and tasting it.*]

Perfect.

A flavor of verbena and of pear,
And something else—wait—yes—

GENTZ.

It's not worth while—

THE DUKE.

What's not worth while?

GENTZ.

To feign an interest.
I'm not so blind as Metternich.
[*He offers him another sweetmeat.*]
A chocolate?

THE DUKE.

What do you see?

GENTZ.

I see a youth who suffers,
Rather than live a favored prince's life.
Your soul is still alive, but here at court
They'll lull it fast asleep with love and music.
I had a soul once, like the rest of the world;
But—! And I wither, decently obscene—
Till some day, in the cause of liberty,
One of those rash young fools of the University
Amid my sweetmeats, perfumes, and dishonor
Slays me as Kotzebue was slain by Sand.
Yes, I'm afraid—do try a sugared raisin—
That I shall perish at his hand.

THE DUKE.

You will.

GENTZ.

What?—How?

THE DUKE.
A youth will slay you.

GENTZ.
But—

THE DUKE.
A youth of your acquaintance.

GENTZ.
Sir—?

THE DUKE.
His name
Is Frederick. 'Tis the youth you were yourself.
For now he's risen again in you; and since
He whispers in your ear like dull remorse,
All's over with you: he will show no mercy.

GENTZ.
'Tis true, my youth cuts like a knife within me.
Ah, well I knew that gaze had not deceived me!
'Tis that of one who ponders upon Empire.

THE DUKE.
I do not understand, sir, what you mean.
[*He moves away.*]

METTERNICH.
[*To* GENTZ.]
You've had a chat with—?

GENTZ.
Yes.

METTERNICH.
Delightful?

GENTZ.
Very.

METTERNICH.
He's in the hollow of my hand.

GENTZ.

Entirely.

THE DUKE.

[*Stopping before* THERESA.]
Why did you weep?

THERESA.

Because, my Lord—

THE DUKE.

Ah, no!
I know. But do not weep.

METTERNICH.

[*Bowing to the* DUKE.]
I take my leave.
[*He goes out with the* ATTACHÉ.]

THE DUKE.

[*To* MARIA LOUISA *and* DIETRICHSTEIN, *who are turning over some papers on his table.*]
Examining my work?

DIETRICHSTEIN.

It's excellent.
But why on purpose make mistakes in German?
Pure mischief!

MARIA LOUISA.

Oh! and at your age, mischief!

THE DUKE.

How can I help it? I am not an eagle.

DIETRICHSTEIN.

You still make France a noun of feminine gender.

THE DUKE.

I never know what's *der* or *die* or *das*.

DIETRICHSTEIN.

In this case neuter is correct.

THE DUKE.

But mean.
I don't much care about a neuter France.

MARIA LOUISA.

[*To* THALBERG, *who is playing softly on the piano.*]
My son detests all music.

THE DUKE.

I detest it.

LORD COWLEY.

[*Coming toward the* DUKE.]
Highness—

DIETRICHSTEIN.

[*Aside to the* DUKE.]
A pleasant word.

THE DUKE.

Eh?

DIETRICHSTEIN.

The English
Ambassador.

LORD COWLEY.

Where had you been just now
When you came galloping and out of breath?

THE DUKE.

I? To Saint Helena.

LORD COWLEY.

I beg your pardon?

THE DUKE.

A wholesome, leafy nook. So gay!—At evening
Delightful. I should like to see you there.

GENTZ.

[*Hastily to the* AMBASSADOR, *while the* DUKE *moves away.*]
They call the village in the Helenenthal
Saint Helena. A fashionable stroll.

LORD COWLEY.

Ah, really? I was almost wondering
Whether he meant it as a hit—?
[*He turns away.*]

GENTZ.

[*Lifting his hands in amazement at* LORD COWLEY'S *dulness.*]
These English!

VOICES.

We're off!

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

[*To* MARIA LOUISA.]
Louisa?

MARIA LOUISA.

No, I stay at home.

VOICES.

The carriages.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

[*To the* DUKE.]
And you, Franz?

MARIA LOUISA.

He hates nature.
He even gallops through Saint Helena.

THE DUKE.

Yes! I gallop!
[*General leave-taking and gradual departure.*

MARIA LOUISA.

So devoid of fancy!

MONTENEGRO.

[*Going.*]
I know a place for supper where the cider—

CRIES.

[*Without.*]
Good-bye! Good-bye!

GENTZ.

[*On the terrace.*]

Don't talk about the hydra!

THERESA.

[*To* TIBURTIUS.]

Brother, good-bye!

TIBURTIUS.

Good-by.

[*He goes out with* BOMBELLES.]

MARIA LOUISA.

[*To the Maids of Honor, indicating* THERESA.]

Show her her rooms.

[THERESA *goes out accompanied by the Maids of Honor.* MARIA LOUISA *calls the Duke, who was going toward the garden.*]

MARIA LOUISA.

Franz!

[*He turns.*]

Now I'm going to amuse you.

THE DUKE.

Really?

[SCARAMPI *carefully closes all the doors.*]

MARIA LOUISA.

Hush!—I've conspired!

THE DUKE.

Mother! You!—Conspired!

MARIA LOUISA.

Hush! They've forbidden whatever comes from France—

But I have ordered secretly from Paris,

From the best houses—Oh! my fop shall smile!—

For you, a tailor,
[*Pointing to* SCARAMPI.]
and for us, a fitter.
I really think the notion—

THE DUKE.

Exquisite!

SCARAMPI.

[*Opening the door of* MARIA LOUISA'S *apartment.*]
Come in!

[*Enter a young lady, dressed with the elegance of a milliner's dummy, and carrying two great card-board dress-boxes, and a young man dressed like a fashion plate, who also carries two big boxes.*]

THE TAILOR.

[*Coming down to the* DUKE, *while the young lady unpacks the dresses on a sofa at the back.*]
If you will favor me, my Lord—
I've here some charming novelties. My clients
Are good enough to trust my taste: I guide them.
The neck-cloths first. A languid violet;
A serious brown. Bandannas are much worn.
I note with pleasure that your Highness knows
The delicate art of building up a stock.
Here's a check pattern makes an elegant knot.
How does this waistcoat strike your Lordship's fancy,
Down which meander wreaths of blossoms?

THE DUKE.

Hideous!

THE TAILOR.

Will these, I wonder, leave your Highness cold?
Here's doeskin. Here a genuine Scottish tweed.
Bottle-green riding-coat with narrow cuffs;
Extremely gentlemanly. Here's a waistcoat;

Six-buttoned. Three left open. Very tasty.
Now, what about this blue frock-coat? We've rubbed
The newness off artistically. Worn
With salt and pepper trousers, what a picture!
We'll throw aside this heavy yellow stuff—
Can Hamlet wear the clumsy clouts of Falstaff?—
We'll pass to mantles, Prince. A splendid plaid,
Demi-collar with simili-sleeves behind.
Eccentric? Granted.—This, called the *Roulière:*
Sober, a large, Hidalgo-like effect;
The very thing to woo a Doña Sol in.
Excellent workmanship; a silver chain; the collar
Of finest sable; made in our own workshops;
Simple, but what a cut! The cut is everything.

MARIA LOUISA.

The Duke is weary of your chatter.

THE DUKE.

No.
He sets me dreaming. I'm not used to it.
For when my tailor from Vienna comes
I never hear these bright, descriptive words;
And so this wealth of curious adjectives
And all that seems to you mere vulgar chatter,
Has moved me—stirred me. Let him be, dear mother.

MARIA LOUISA.

[*Going to the fitter.*]
We'll look at ours. Shoulder of mutton sleeves?

THE FITTER.

Always.

THE TAILOR.

[*Displaying a pattern.*]
This cloth is called Marengo.

THE DUKE.

What?
Marengo?

THE TAILOR.
Yes; it wears uncommon well.

THE DUKE.
So I should think. Marengo lasts forever.

THE TAILOR.
Your Highness orders—?

THE DUKE.
I have need of nothing.

THE TAILOR.
One always needs a perfect-fitting coat.

THE DUKE.
I might invent—

THE TAILOR.
To suit your personal taste?
O client, soar to fancy's wildest heights!
Speak! We will follow! That's our special line;
Why, we are Monsieur Théophile Gautier's tailors.

THE DUKE.
Let's see—

THE FITTER.
A Panama with muslin trimmings—
That's not the sort of hat for everybody.

THE DUKE.
Could you make—

THE TAILOR.
Anything.

THE DUKE.
A—

THE TAILOR.
What you choose!

THE DUKE.
A coat?

THE TAILOR.
Assuredly.

THE DUKE.
Of broadcloth. Yes
But now the texture? Simple?

THE TAILOR.
Certainly.

THE DUKE.
And then the color. What do you say to green?

THE TAILOR.
Green's capital.

THE DUKE.
A little coat of green.
With glimpses of the waistcoat?

THE TAILOR.
Coat wide open!

THE DUKE.
Then, to give color when the wearer moves,
The skirts are lined with scarlet.

THE TAILOR.
Scarlet!
Oh, ravishing.

THE DUKE.
Well, but about the waistcoat.
How do you see the waistcoat?

THE TAILOR.
Shall we say—?

THE DUKE.
The waistcoat's white.

THE TAILOR.
What taste!

THE DUKE.

And then I think
Knee breeches.

THE TAILOR.

Ah!

THE DUKE.

Yes.

THE TAILOR.

Any color?

THE DUKE.

No.
I rather think I see them white cashmere.

THE TAILOR.

Well, after all, white is the more becoming.

THE DUKE.

The buttons are engraved.

THE TAILOR.

That's not good style.

THE DUKE.

Yes; something—nothing—merely little eagles.

THE TAILOR.

Eagles!

THE DUKE.

Well? What are you afraid of, sir?
And wherefore does your hand shake, master tailor?
What is there strange about the suit of clothes?
Do you no longer boast your skill to make it?

THE FITTER.

Coalscuttle bonnet neatly trimmed with poppies.

THE DUKE.

Take home your latest fashions and your patterns;
That little suit's the only one I want.

THE TAILOR.

But I—

THE DUKE.

'Tis well. Begone, and be discreet.

THE TAILOR.

Yet—

THE DUKE.

'Twould not fit me.

THE TAILOR.

It would fit you.

THE DUKE.

What!

THE TAILOR.

It would fit you well.

THE DUKE.

You're very bold, sir!

THE TAILOR.

And I'm empowered to take your order for it.

THE DUKE.

Ah!

THE TAILOR.

Yes!

THE FITTER.

A flowing cloak of China crape;
Embroidered lining with enormous sleeves.

THE DUKE.

Indeed?

THE TAILOR.

Yes, Highness.

THE DUKE.

A conspirator?
Now I no longer wonder you cite Shakespeare!

THE TAILOR.

The little coat of green holds in its thrall
Deputies, schools, a Peer, and a Field Marshal.

THE FITTER.

Spencer of figured muslin. Satin skirt.

THE TAILOR.

We can arrange your flight.

THE DUKE.

Should I agree
I must beforehand—ay, and there's the rub—
Consult my friend Prince Metternich.

THE TAILOR.

You'll trust us
When you are told our leader is your cousin
The Countess Camerata.

THE DUKE.

Ah, I know!
The daughter of Elisa Baciocchi.

THE TAILOR.

The strange, unarmored amazon, who bears
Her father's likeness proudly in her face,
Seeks dangers, rides unbroken horses, fences—

THE FITTER.

A little sleeveless gown of lightest muslin.

THE TAILOR.

And when you know it's this Penthesilea—

THE FITTER.

The collar's only pinned, the shoulders basted—

THE TAILOR.

Who heads the plot I spoke of—

THE DUKE.

Give me proof!

THE TAILOR.

Turn round, your Highness; glance at the young person
Who on her knees unpacks the clothes.

THE DUKE.

'Tis she!
Not long ago I met her in Vienna,
Wrapped in a cloak. She swiftly kissed my hand
And fled, exclaiming, Haven't I the right
To greet the Emperor's son who is my master?
She is a Bonaparte! We are alike!—
Ay, but her hair is dark; not fair like mine.

MARIA LOUISA.

We'll try them on in there. Come, follow me.
Only Parisians, Franz, know how to fit us.

THE DUKE.

Yes, mother.

MARIA LOUISA.

Don't you love Parisian taste?

THE DUKE.

It's very true they dress you well in Paris.

[MARIA LOUISA, SCARAMPI, *and the* FITTER *go into* MARIA LOUISA'S *apartment with the things they are to try on.*]

THE DUKE.

Now! Who are you, sir?

THE TAILOR.

I? A nameless atom.
Weary of life in mean and paltry times,
Of smoking pipes and dreaming of ideals.
Who am I? How do I know? That's my trouble.
Am I at all?—It's very hard to "be."
I study Victor Hugo; spout his odes—

I tell you this, because this sort of thing
Is all contemporary youth. I spend
Extravagant fortunes in acquiring boredom.
I am an artist, Highness, and Young France.
Also I'm carbonaro at your service.
And as I'm always bored I wear red waistcoats,
And that amuses me. At tying neck-cloths
I once was very good indeed. That's why
They sent me here to-day to play the tailor.
I'll add, to make the picture quite complete,
That I'm a liberal and a king-devourer.
My life and dagger are at your command.

THE DUKE.

I like you, sir, although your talk is crazy.

THE YOUNG MAN.

You must not judge me by my whirling words;
The itch of notoriety consumes me,
But the disease beneath is very real,
And makes me seek forgetfulness in danger.

THE DUKE.

Disease?

THE YOUNG MAN.

A shuddering disgust.

THE DUKE.

Your soul
Heavy with foiled ambitions?

THE YOUNG MAN.

Dull disquiet—

THE DUKE.

Morbid enjoyment of our sufferings,
And pride in showing off our pallid brows?

THE YOUNG MAN.

My Lord!

THE DUKE.

Contempt for those who live content?

THE YOUNG MAN.

My Lord!

THE DUKE.

And doubt?

THE YOUNG MAN.

In what mysterious volume
Has one so young learnt all the human heart?
For that is what I feel.

THE DUKE.

Give me your hand!
For, as a sapling, friend, which is transplanted,
Feels all the forest in its ignorant veins,
And suffers when its distant mates are hurt,
So I, who knew you not, here, all alone,
Felt the distemper stirring in my blood
Which at this moment blights the youth of France.

THE YOUNG MAN.

Rather I think our malady is yours,
For whence upon you falls this giant robe?
Child, whom beforehand they have robbed of glory,
Pale Prince, so pale against your sable suit,
Why are you pale, my Prince?

THE DUKE.

I am his son.

THE YOUNG MAN.

Well! Feeble, feverish, dreaming of the past,
Like you rebellious, what is left to do?—
We're all, to some extent, your father's sons.

THE DUKE.

You are his soldiers' sons: that's just as glorious.
And 'tis no less redoubtable a burden;
But it emboldens me, for I can say

They're but the sons of heroes of the empire:
They'll be content to take the Emperor's son!

THE COUNTESS CAMERATA.

[*Coming out of* MARIA LOUISA'S *apartments.*]
The scarf!—Oh, hush! I'm doing such a trade!

THE DUKE.

Thank you!

THE COUNTESS.

I only wish 'twere selling swords!
That silly baby-talk will be my death.

THE DUKE.

Warlike, I know.

A VOICE.

[*Within.*]
The scarf!

THE COUNTESS.

I'm looking for it!

THE DUKE.

It seems this little hand can tame—

THE COUNTESS.

I love
A fiery horse.

THE DUKE.

You're mistress of the foils?

THE COUNTESS.

And of the sword!

THE DUKE.

Ready for anything?

THE COUNTESS.

[*Speaking toward the room.*]
Indeed, I'm looking for it everywhere.
[*To the* DUKE.]
Ready for anything for your Imperial Highness.

THE DUKE.
You're lion-hearted, Cousin!

THE COUNTESS.
And my name
Is glorious.

THE DUKE.
Which name?

THE COUNTESS.
Napoleone!

SCARAMPI'S VOICE.
[*Within.*]
Well? Can't you find it?

THE COUNTESS.
No.

A VOICE.
Look on the piano.

THE COUNTESS.
I must be off. Discuss our great design.
[*With a cry, as if she had found what she was looking for.*]
Ah! here it is!

THE VOICE.
You've found it?

THE COUNTESS.
On the harp.
You understand, it's gathered up in folds—
[*She goes into* MARIA LOUISA'S *room.*]

THE YOUNG MAN.
Well? You accept?

THE DUKE.
I don't quite understand
Zealous Imperialism from a liberal—

THE YOUNG MAN.

True: a republican—

THE DUKE.

You come to me
Rather a long way round—

THE YOUNG MAN.

All roads to-day
Lead to the King of Rome. My scarlet badge
I thought unfading—

THE DUKE.

Faded in the sun?

THE YOUNG MAN.

Of Austerlitz! Yes! History makes us drunk.
The battles which no more are fought, are told.
The blood is vanished, but the glory gleams,
So that to-day there is no he but *HE!*
He never won such victories as now:
His soldiers perished, but his poets live.

THE DUKE.

In short—

THE YOUNG MAN.

In short the huckstering times; the god
They exiled; you, your touching fate, our weariness,
And everything—I said—

THE DUKE.

You said as artist
'Twould be effective to be Bonapartist!

THE YOUNG MAN.

So you accept?

THE DUKE.

No.

THE YOUNG MAN.

What?

THE DUKE.

I listened well,
And you were charming as you spoke, but nothing,
No quiver of your voice, told me of France;
You voiced a craze, a form of literature.

THE YOUNG MAN.

I've carried out my mission clumsily;
Could but the Countess yonder speak!

THE DUKE.

No use.
I love the bravery glowing in her eyes,
But that's not France: that is my Family!
When next you seek me, later, by and by,
Let the call come through some untutored voice,
Wherein rough accents of the people throb;
Your Byronism is much too like myself.
You could not have persuaded me to-night—
I feel myself unready for the crown.

THE COUNTESS.

[*Coming out of* MARIA LOUISA'S *apartment.*]
Unready? You?
[*She turns toward the room.*]
Don't trouble; I'm just going.
And for the ball the white one, not the mauve.
[*Coming hastily toward the* DUKE.]
Unready? What do you want?

THE DUKE.

A year of dreams,
Of study.

THE COUNTESS.

Come and reign.

THE DUKE.

My brain's not ripe.

THE COUNTESS.
The crown's enough to ripen any brain.

THE DUKE.
The crown of light, shed by the midnight lamp.

THE YOUNG MAN.
It's such a chance!

THE DUKE.
I beg your pardon? "Chance"?
Is this the tailor reappearing?

THE COUNTESS.
Yet—

THE DUKE.
I will be honest in default of genius.
I only ask three hundred wakeful nights.

THE YOUNG MAN.
But this refusal will confirm the rumors.

THE COUNTESS.
They say you've never really been of us.

THE YOUNG MAN.
You are Young France: you're called Old Austria.

THE COUNTESS.
They say your mind is being weakened.

THE YOUNG MAN.
Yes!
They say you're cheated, even in your studies.

THE COUNTESS.
They say you do not know your father's history.

THE DUKE.
Do they say that?

THE YOUNG MAN.
What shall we answer them?

THE DUKE.

Answer them thus—

[*Enter* DIETRICHSTEIN.]

Dear Count!

DIETRICHSTEIN.

'Tis Obenaus.

THE DUKE.

Ah! for my history lesson! Let him come.

[DIETRICHSTEIN *goes out. The* DUKE *points to the clothes scattered about.*]

Spend as much time as possible in packing,
And try to get forgotten in your corner.

[*Seeing* DIETRICHSTEIN *come in with* BARON VON OBENAUS.]

Good-day, dear Baron.

[*Carelessly to the* YOUNG MAN *and the* COUNTESS, *pointing to the screen.*]

Finish over there.

[*To* OBENAUS.]

My tailor.

OBENAUS.

Ah?

THE DUKE.

My mother's fitter.

OBENAUS.

Yes?

THE DUKE.

Will they disturb you?

OBENAUS.

[*Who has seated himself behind the table with* DIETRICHSTEIN.]

Not at all, my Lord.

THE DUKE.

[*Who sits facing them, sharpening a pencil.*]
I'm all attention. Let me sharpen this
To note a date, or jot down an idea.

OBENAUS.

We'll take our work up where we last left off.
Eighteen hundred and five, I think?

THE DUKE.

[*Busy with his pencil.*] Exactly.

OBENAUS.

In eighteen hundred and six—

THE DUKE.

Did no event
Make that year memorable?

OBENAUS.

Which, my Lord?

THE DUKE.

[*Blowing the dust off the pencil.*]
Why, eighteen hundred and five.

OBENAUS.

I beg your pardon.
I thought you meant—h'm—Destiny
Was cruel to the righteous cause. We'll cast
Only a fleeting glance at hapless hours.
When the philosopher with pensive gaze—

THE DUKE.

And so in eighteen five, sir, nothing happened?

OBENAUS.

A great event, my Lord! I had forgotten.
The restoration of the Calendar.
A little later, having challenged England,
Spain—

THE DUKE.

[*Demurely.*]
And the Emperor?

OBENAUS.

Which Emp—?

THE DUKE.

My father.

OBENAUS.

He—he—

THE DUKE.

Had he not left Boulogne?

OBENAUS.

Oh, yes.

THE DUKE.

Where was he, then?

OBENAUS.

Well, as it happened, here.

THE DUKE.

[*With mock amazement.*]
Indeed?

DIETRICHSTEIN.

[*Hastily.*]
He took great interest in Bavaria!

OBENAUS.

Your father's wishes in the Pressburg Treaty,
As far as that went, chimed with those of Austria.

THE DUKE.

What was the Pressburg Treaty?

OBENAUS.

The agreement
Which closed an era.

THE DUKE.

There! I've smashed my point!

OBENAUS.
In eighteen hundred and seven—

THE DUKE.
So soon? How quick!
Strange epoch! Nothing happened in it!

OBENAUS.
Yes.
For instance, take the House of the Braganzas:
The King—

THE DUKE.
The Emperor, sir?

OBENAUS.
Which Emp—?

THE DUKE.
Of France.

OBENAUS.
Nothing of any consequence till eighteen-eight.
Yet let us note the Treaty of Tilsit.

THE DUKE.
Was nothing done but making treaties?

OBENAUS.
Europe—

THE DUKE.
I see. A general survey?

OBENAUS.
I'll come to details
When we've—

THE DUKE.
Did nothing happen?

OBENAUS.
Well—

THE DUKE.
Well, what?

OBENAUS.

I—

THE DUKE.

What? What happened? Won't you tell me?

OBENAUS.

Well—

I hardly know—you're in a merry humor—

THE DUKE.

You hardly know? Then, gentlemen, I'll tell you!
The sixth October, eighteen-five—

OBENAUS *and* DIETRICHSTEIN.

[*Leaping to their feet.*]

Eh? What?

THE DUKE.

When he was least expected, when Vienna,
Watching the Eagle hover ere he swooped,
Sighed with relief, The blow is aimed at London!
Having left Strassburg, crossed the Rhine at Kehl,
The Emperor—

OBENAUS.

Emperor!

THE DUKE.

Yes! and you know which!
Marches through Würtemberg, marches through Baden—

DIETRICHSTEIN.

Great Heavens!

THE DUKE.

Gives Austria a morning song,
With drums by Soult, and trumpets by Murat!
At Wertingen and Augsburg leaves his Marshals
With here and there a victory to play with—

OBENAUS.

My Lord!

THE DUKE.

Pursues with wonderful manœuvres,
Arrives at Ulm before he's changed his boots,
Bids Ney take Elchingen, sits down and writes
A joyous, terrible, and calm despatch,
Prepares the assault:—the seventeenth October
Sees seven thousand Austrians disarmed,
And eighteen generals at the hero's feet;
And then he starts again!

DIETRICHSTEIN.

My Lord!

THE DUKE.

November
Finds him at Schönbrunn, sleeping in my bedroom.

OBENAUS.

But—!

THE DUKE.

He pursues! his foes are in his hand!
One night he says "To-morrow!" and to-morrow
Says, galloping along the bannered front—
A spot of grey among his brilliant staff—
"Soldiers, we'll finish with a thunderbolt!"
The army is an ocean. He awaits
The rising sun, and places with a smile
This risen sun athwart his history!

OBENAUS.

Oh, Dietrichstein!

THE DUKE.

So there!

DIETRICHSTEIN.

Oh, Obenaus!

THE DUKE.

Terror and death! Two Emperors beaten by one!
And twenty thousand prisoners!

OBENAUS.

I beseech you!

People might hear!

THE DUKE.

When the campaign was over—

The corpses floating on the freezing lake—

My Grandsire seeks my Father in his camp!

OBENAUS.

My Lord!

THE DUKE.

His *camp!*

OBENAUS.

Will nothing keep you quiet?

THE DUKE.

And so my Father grants my Grandsire peace!

DIETRICHSTEIN.

If any heard you!

THE DUKE.

And the conquered banners

Distributed! Eight to the town of Paris—

[*The* COUNTESS *and the* YOUNG MAN *have gradually come out, pale and excited, from behind the screen. They listen to the* DUKE *with increasing emotion, and suddenly the boxes they are carrying slip from their hands.*]

OBENAUS.

[*Turning and seeing them.*]

Oh!

THE DUKE.

The Senate fifty!

OBENAUS.

Look! The man and woman!

DIETRICHSTEIN.
Be off with you!

THE DUKE.
Fifty to Notre Dame!

OBENAUS.
Oh, Lord! Oh, Lord!

THE DUKE.
And banners!

DIETRICHSTEIN.
Take your things!
[*He pushes them out.*]
Be off! Be off!

THE DUKE.
And banners! And still banners!
[THE COUNTESS *and* THE YOUNG MAN *go.*]

DIETRICHSTEIN.
They heard it all!

THE DUKE.
And banners!

DIETRICHSTEIN.
What a business!
My Lord!

THE DUKE.
I'm dumb!

DIETRICHSTEIN.
A little late, my Lord!
What will Prince Metternich—? These people here!

THE DUKE.
Moreover, that's as far as I have got.
My dear professor—
[*He coughs.*]

DIETRICHSTEIN.
Oh, you're coughing! Water!

THE DUKE.
I've made good progress with my history?

DIETRICHSTEIN.
And yet no books come near you! That I'm sure of!

OBENAUS.
When Metternich discovers—

THE DUKE.
You won't tell him!
The blame would fall on you.

DIETRICHSTEIN.
We'd best keep still,
And ask his mother to expostulate.
[*He knocks at* MARIA LOUISA'S *door.*]
The Duchess—?

SCARAMPI.
[*Appearing.*]
She is ready. You may come.
[DIETRICHSTEIN *goes in.*]

THE DUKE.
[*Mockingly, to* OBENAUS.]
Your course, *Ad usum,* sir, *Delphini,* sir,
Is finished, sir!

OBENAUS.
I can't think how you learnt—!
[MARIA LOUISA *comes in in great agitation, in a superb ball-dress, and with her cloak on.* OBENAUS *and* DIETRICHSTEIN *go out quietly.*]

MARIA LOUISA.
Oh Heavens! what is't again? What must I hear?
Perhaps you will explain—

THE DUKE.

[*Showing her the open window.*]

My mother, look,
The day is hushed, but for belated birds.
Oh, with what tenderness the gloaming fades!
The trees—

MARIA LOUISA.

What, you! Can you feel nature's beauty?

THE DUKE.

Perhaps.

MARIA LOUISA.

Perhaps you will explain—

THE DUKE.

Oh, mother,
Inhale the perfume. All the forest floats
Into the chamber on its breath!

MARIA LOUISA.

Explain!

THE DUKE.

With every gust a branch is wafted in!
A fairer miracle than that which scared
Macbeth; the forest is not walking only,
Not like a mad thing walking; lo! on wings
The scented evening sets the forest flying!

MARIA LOUISA.

What! You can be poetical!

THE DUKE.

At times.

[*Distant music is heard.*]

Listen! A waltz. An ordinary waltz;
Yet distance gives it dignity. Who knows?
Journeying through the woods the master haunted,
Under the cyclamen, among the bracken,
It may have chanced upon Beethoven's soul!

MARIA LOUISA.

What! Musical as well!

THE DUKE.

Yes; when I choose.
I do not choose! I hate the mystery
Of sounds! And in a lovely sunset, feel
With dread some fair thing growing soft within me!

MARIA LOUISA.

That fair thing in your heart, my son, is I!

THE DUKE.

You said it.

MARIA LOUISA.

Do you hate it?

THE DUKE.

I love *you.*

MARIA LOUISA.

Then think a little ere you do me harm.
My father and Prince Metternich are so good!
When the decree, for instance, made you Count,
I said, Not Count; Duke at the least; for Duke
Is something. And you're Duke of Reichstadt.

THE DUKE.

Lord of Gross-Bohen, Buchtiehrad, Tirnowan,
Schwaden, Kron-Porsitschan—

MARIA LOUISA.

And then, the tact!
Your father's name was never mentioned once!

THE DUKE.

Why not have called me "Son of unknown Father"?

MARIA LOUISA.

With your estates and revenues you can be
The pleasantest and richest Prince of Austria.

THE DUKE.

The richest Prince?

MARIA LOUISA.

And pleasantest—

THE DUKE.

Of—Austria!

MARIA LOUISA.

Enjoy your happiness.

THE DUKE.

I drain its lees.

MARIA LOUISA.

First in precedence after the Archdukes,
Some day you'll marry with a fair Princess,
Or an Archduchess, or perhaps a—

THE DUKE.

Ever
I see what once my childish eyes caught sight of:
His little throne, whose back was like a drum,
And, made of gold, more splendid since Saint Helena.
Upon that back the simple little N,
The letter which cries No to time!

MARIA LOUISA.

But—

THE DUKE.

Yes!
The N with which he branded Kings!

MARIA LOUISA.

The Kings
Whose blood runs through your mother's veins and yours!

THE DUKE.

I do not need their blood! What use to me?

MARIA LOUISA.

A glorious heritage!

THE DUKE.

Oh, paltry!

MARIA LOUISA.

What!
Not proud to bear the blood of Charles the Fifth?

THE DUKE.

No! for it coûrses in the veins of others!
But when I tell myself I bear in mine
A Corsican Lieutenant's blood, I weep
To see the thin blue trickle at my wrist.

MARIA LOUISA.

Franz!

THE DUKE.

And the old blood can but harm the new.
If I bear blood of Kings, let me be bled.

MARIA LOUISA.

Silence!

THE DUKE.

What am I saying, after all?
If ever I had yours long since I've lost it.
His blood and yours have fought in me, and yours
Was put to flight, as usual, by the other.

MARIA LOUISA.

Peace, Duke of Reichstadt!

THE DUKE.

Metternich, the fool,
Thought to scrawl "Duke of Reichstadt" o'er my name,
But hold the paper up before the sun:
You'll see "Napoleon" in the watermark!

MARIA LOUISA.

My son!

THE DUKE.

You called me Duke of Reichstadt? No!
But would you have my veritable name?
'Tis what the people call me in the Prater
As they make way: The Little Bonaparte!
I am his son! and no one's son but his!

MARIA LOUISA.

You hurt me.

THE DUKE.

Ah, forgive me, mother, mother.
Go to the ball, forget my frenzied words.
You need not even trouble to repeat them
To Metternich, my mother.

MARIA LOUISA.

Do you think so?

THE DUKE.

Softly the waltz floats through the evening air;
No, tell him nothing; that will save you trouble.
Forget it all: you, who forget so quickly!

MARIA LOUISA.

Yet—

THE DUKE.

Think of Parma, of the Sala palace,
And of your happy life. Is this a brow
To bear the shadow of an eagle's wing?
Ah! but I love you more than you can think!
And take no heed of aught—not even—O gods!—
Of being faithful: I'll be that for both.
Come, let me thrust you gently toward the ball;
Good-night. The mosses must not wet your feet.
Your headdress is perfection.

MARIA LOUISA.

Do you think so?

THE DUKE.

The carriage waits. It's fine. The night is clear.
Good-night, Mamma; enjoy yourself.

[MARIA LOUISA *goes out.* THE DUKE *sinks in a chair before his table.*]

Alas,
Poor mother!

[*His manner changes, and he draws books and papers toward him.*]

Now! to work!

[*The wheels of a departing carriage are heard. The door at the back opens gently and* GENTZ *is seen introducing a woman wrapped in a cloak.*]

GENTZ.

She's gone!

[*He calls the* PRINCE.]

Prince!

THE DUKE.

[*Turning and seeing him.*]

Fanny?

FANNY ELSSLER.

Franz!

GENTZ.

[*Aside.*]

Farewell to dreams of Empire!

FANNY.

[*In the* DUKE'S *arms.*]

Franz!

GENTZ.

[*Going out.*]

Capital!

FANNY.

[*Lovingly.*]

My Franz!

[*The door closes on* GENTZ. FANNY *quickly leaves the* DUKE *and speaks respectfully after making a profound curtsey.*]

My Lord!

THE DUKE.

[*After looking round to assure himself* GENTZ *is gone.*]

To work!

FANNY.

[*Swinging herself on to the table.*]

I've learnt whole chapters for to-day!

THE DUKE.

Go on.

FANNY.

So, then, while Marshal Ney marched through the night,

The Generals Gazan—

THE DUKE.

[*Learning the names by heart.*]

Gazan—

FANNY.

Suchet—

THE DUKE.

Suchet—

FANNY.

Kept up a lively cannonade;

And at the earliest dawn the Imperial Guard—

CURTAIN.

THE SECOND ACT

The DUKE'S *cabinet at Schönbrunn. It is the famous Lacquered Chamber. At the back is a window opening on a balcony. In the distance, at the end of a beautiful avenue, the "Gloriette," a Corinthian Portico. There are two doors on the left, and two on the right. Between these doors stand two large Louis XV. consoles. There is a large writing-table and other furniture in the styles of Louis XIV. and Louis XV. In the right-hand corner in front stands a large swinging mirror, with its back to the audience.*

At the rise of the curtain SEDLNIZKY (*the Prefect of the Police*), *the* USHER, *and a number of* LACKEYS *are discovered.*

SEDLNIZKY.

THAT'S all?

FIRST LACKEY.

That's all.

SEDLNIZKY.

Nothing abnormal?

SECOND LACKEY.

Nothing.

THIRD LACKEY.

Eats little.

FOURTH LACKEY.

Reads a lot.

FIFTH LACKEY.
Sleeps very badly.

SEDLNIZKY.
[*To the* USHER.]
And can you trust his personal attendants?

THE USHER.
Why, they are all professional policemen,
As you, the Prefect of Police, must know.

SEDLNIZKY.
Thank you. I fear the Duke may find me here.

FIRST LACKEY.
No, sir; he's out.

SECOND LACKEY.
As usual at this hour.

THIRD LACKEY.
In uniform.

FOURTH LACKEY.
And with his Aides-de-Camp.

THE USHER.
There are manœuvres.

SEDLNIZKY.
Well, be keen and tactful.
Let him not know he's watched.

THE USHER.
I'm very cunning.

SEDLNIZKY.
Not too much zeal! I dread a zealous man.
Don't listen at his keyhole in a crowd.

THE USHER.
I've given that duty to a special man.

SEDLNIZKY.
To whom?

THE USHER.
The Piedmontese.

SEDLNIZKY.

Ah yes; he's clever.

THE USHER.

I place him every evening in this chamber
Immediately his Highness seeks his room.

SEDLNIZKY.

Is he here now?

THE USHER.

No. As he wakes all night
He sleeps by daytime, while the Duke is out.
He'll be here when the Duke is.

SEDLNIZKY.

Let him watch.

THE USHER.

Trust me.

SEDLNIZKY.

[*Glancing at the table.*]
The papers—?

THE USHER.

[*With a smile.*]
Searched.

SEDLNIZKY.

[*Stooping under the table.*]
The basket, too?

[*Seeing scraps of paper under the table, he hastily kneels to examine them.*]

These scraps?

[*He tries to read.*]
Perhaps a letter?

[*Urged by professional curiosity he creeps under the table.*]
But from whom?

[*The* DUKE *enters in the uniform of an Austrian officer, followed by his Staff. The* LACKEYS *hurriedly range themselves.*]

THE DUKE.

[*Seeing* SEDLNIZKY'S *legs protruding from under the table; very simply.*]

Why, how are *you,* Sedlnizky?

SEDLNIZKY.

[*Emerging amazed on all fours.*]

Highness!

THE DUKE.

An accident. Excuse me. Just come in.

SEDLNIZKY.

[*Standing.*]

You knew me? Yet I was—

THE DUKE.

Flat on your stomach?

Oh yes, I knew you.

[*He sees the* ARCHDUCHESS, *who enters hurriedly carrying a large album.*]

Ah, I feared as much!

They've frightened you.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

They told me—

THE DUKE.

It was nothing.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

But yet—

THE DUKE.

[*Seeing* DOCTOR MALFATTI *enter.*]

The doctor! But I am not ill!

[*To the* ARCHDUCHESS.]

Nothing. A choking. So I left parade.

I had been shouting.

[*To the* DOCTOR, *who is feeling his pulse.*]

Doctor, you're a nuisance!

[*To* SEDLNIZKY, *who is sidling toward the door.*]

'Twas very kind of you to sort my papers.

You're spoiling me. Indeed you are. You've chosen
Even my lackeys from among your friends.

SEDLNIZKY.

Your Highness does not think—!

THE DUKE.

I shouldn't mind
If only they performed their duties better.
But I am villanously groomed. My stock
Rides up. In short, since this is your department,
I wish you'd black my boots a little better.

[*A* LACKEY *brings a tray with refreshments, which the* DOCTOR *takes.*]

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

[*Anxious to help the* DUKE *from the tray.*]
Franz—

THE DUKE.

[*To* SEDLNIZKY, *who is again making for the door.*]
You take nothing—?

SEDLNIZKY.

I have taken—

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

A Tartar!

THE DUKE.

Orders, Foresti!

FORESTI.

Colonel!

THE DUKE.

We'll manœuvre
At early dawn the day after to-morrow;
Assemble at Grosshoffen.

FORESTI.

Good, my Colonel!

THE DUKE.

[*To the* OFFICERS.]
I'll not detain you, gentlemen. Good-day.

[FORESTI *and the* OFFICERS *go out.*]

THE DUKE.

[*To* SEDLNIZKY, *taking a letter out of his pocket, and tossing it toward him.*]

Dear Count, here is another you've not read.

[SEDLNIZKY *and the* DOCTOR *go out.*]

DIETRICHSTEIN.

[*Who came in a moment ago.*]

I think you treat him rather harshly, Highness.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Is not the Duke at perfect liberty?

DIETRICHSTEIN.

Of course the Duke is not a prisoner, but—

THE DUKE.

I like that "but," I hope you feel its value!
Good Lord, I'm not a prisoner, "but"—that's all:
"But"—not a prisoner, "but"—that is the word,
The formula! A prisoner? Oh, not a moment!
"But" there are always people at my heels.
A prisoner? Not I! You know I'm not;
"But" if I risk a stroll across the park
A hidden eye blossoms behind each leaf.
Of course not prisoner, "but" let anyone
Seek private speech with me, beneath each hedge
Up springs the mushroom ear. I'm truly not
A prisoner, "but" when I ride, I feel
The delicate attention of an escort.
I'm not the least bit in the world a prisoner,
"But" I'm the second to unseal my letters.
Not at all prisoner, "but" at night they post
A lackey at my door—look! there he goes.
I, Duke of Reichstadt, prisoner? Never! never!
I, prisoner? No! I'm not a prisoner—"but"—!

DIETRICHSTEIN.

I love to see this mirth—so rare—

THE DUKE.

Yes, devilish!

DIETRICHSTEIN.

[*Taking his leave.*]
Your Highness—

THE DUKE.

Serenissimus!

DIETRICHSTEIN.

Eh!

THE DUKE.

—issimus!
That is my title. My particular title
Kindly remember it another time!

DIETRICHSTEIN.

[*Bowing.*]
I leave you—
[*He goes.*]

THE DUKE.

[*To the* ARCHDUCHESS.]
Serenissimus! how glorious!
[*Pointing to the album.*]
What's that?

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

The Emperor's herbarium.

THE DUKE.

Lord!
Grandpapa's botany!

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

He lent it me
This morning, Franz.

THE DUKE.

[*Examining it.*]
It's pretty.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

You know Latin,
What is this withered black thing?

THE DUKE.

That's a rose.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Franz, there's been something wrong with you of late.

THE DUKE.

[*Reading.*]
Bengalensis.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Of Bengal?

THE DUKE.

That's right.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

I find you nervous. What's the matter?

THE DUKE.

Nothing.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Yes, but I know, your bosom-friend Prokesch,
The confidant of hopes they think too vast,
They've sent him far away.

THE DUKE.

But in exchange
They give me Marshal Marmont as a friend.
Despised in France, he crawls to Austria
To gather praise for treason to my Father.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Hush!

THE DUKE

And a man like that is here to set
The son against the Father!—Oh!—
[*Reading.*]
Volubilis.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Franz, when you promise do you keep your word?

THE DUKE.

You've been so good to me, I could not break it.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Besides, you liked my birthday present, Franz.

THE DUKE.

Ah, yes! These relics from the archducal trophy!

[*He takes the things he mentions, which are on a console between the doors on the right.*]

A tinder box—a busby of the Guard—
An ancient musket—No! it isn't loaded!
And above all—

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Oh, hush!

THE DUKE.

That other thing—
I've hidden it.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Where, you bandit?

THE DUKE.

In my den.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Well, promise then—your grandfather—you know
His kindness—

THE DUKE.

[*Picking up a paper which has fallen from the herbarium.*]

What is this? A sheet of paper?

[*He reads.*]

"And if the students still persist in shouting,
Let them be crimped and sent on active service—"

[*To the* ARCHDUCHESS.]

You said—his kindness—

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Yes; the Emperor loves you.
His goodness—

THE DUKE.

[*Picking up another paper fallen from the herbarium.*]
Here's another.
[*He reads.*]
"As the mob
Resist you, cut them down."
[*To the* ARCHDUCHESS.]
His goodness—

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

He hates the ferment of the modern mind,
But he's an excellent old man.

THE DUKE.

Two-sided.
Flowers from whose leaves death-sentences are shed,
Good Emperor Franz is like these specimens.
[*He closes the herbarium.*]
However, he's beloved, he's popular,
I love him well.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

How he could help your cause!

THE DUKE.

Ah! if he would!

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Promise you'll never fly
Until you've tried your utmost with him.

THE DUKE.

Yes,
I promise that.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

And I'll reward you now.

THE DUKE.

You?

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Oh, one has one's little influence!
The astounding Prokesch they deprived you of—
I said and did so much—in short, he's here.

[*She strikes the ground with her parasol. The door opens and* PROKESCH *enters. The* DUKE *rushes to him. The* ARCHDUCHESS *goes out quickly.*]

THE DUKE.

At last!

PROKESCH.

They may be listening.

THE DUKE.

Oh, they are!
They never tell, though.

PROKESCH.

What?

THE DUKE.

I've tested them.
Uttered the most seditious sentiments;
They've never been repeated. Never.

PROKESCH.

Strange!

THE DUKE.

I think the listener, paid by the police,
Pockets the cash and stops his friendly ears.

PROKESCH.

The Countess Camerata? Any news?

THE DUKE.

Nothing.

PROKESCH.

Oh!

THE DUKE.

Nothing. She's forgotten me;
Or else she's been discovered—or, perhaps—
What folly not to have fled last year! And yet
'Twas better; now I'm readier, but—forgotten.

PROKESCH.

Oh, hush! Your work-room? Charming.

THE DUKE.

It's Chinese.
The hideous gilded birds! The nightmare faces
Sneering with scorpion-smiles from every corner!
They lodge me in the famous lacquered chamber
So that my uniform may seem more white
Against the blackness of its glowing walls!

PROKESCH.

Prince!

THE DUKE.

They've surrounded me with fools and knaves.

PROKESCH.

What have you done these last six months?

THE DUKE.

I've raged!

PROKESCH.

I'd never seen this Schönbrunn.

THE DUKE.

It's a tomb.

PROKESCH.

The Gloriette looks well against the sky.

THE DUKE.

Yes, while my heart is hungering for glory
I've that diminutive: the Gloriette!

PROKESCH.

You've all the park to ride in.

THE DUKE.

Oh, the park
Is much too little.

PROKESCH.

Well, then, the valley.

THE DUKE.

The valley is too little for a gallop.

PROKESCH.

What do you want for galloping?

THE DUKE.

All Europe!

PROKESCH.

Oh, hush!

THE DUKE.

When from the glowing page of history
I lift dazed eyes, a forehead splashed with glory,
Closing my Plutarch, leap with thee, O Cæsar,
Upon a conquered land, with Alexander,
With Hannibal, with thee, my Father—

A LACKEY.

[*Entering.*]

What
Will your Highness please to wear to-night?

THE DUKE.

[*To* PROKESCH.]
There!
[*To the* LACKEY.]
I'm not going out.
[*The* LACKEY *disappears.*]

PROKESCH.

[*Who has been turning over some books.*]

They let you read?

THE DUKE.

Oh, anything. The days are past when Fanny,
That I might learn, learnt history by heart.
And, later, books were handed me in secret.

PROKESCH.

The good Archduchess—?

THE DUKE.

Every day a book.
Locked safe all night I read it. I was drunk!
When it was finished, to conceal my crime,
I tossed it on the tester's canopy,
And there the heap grew, hidden in the darkness;
I slept beneath a dome of history.
All day the heap lay quiet, but at night,
When I was sleeping, it began to stir,
And from the pages clamorous with battles,
The battles issued, stretching torpid wings;
And laurels showered upon my slumbering eyes.
Austerlitz gleamed among my curtains, Jena
Glowed in the gilded tassels holding them
And on a sudden lapsed into my dream.
Till once, when Metternich was gravely telling
His version of my father's history,
Down comes my canopy crushed by the glory;
A hundred volumes with their fluttering pages
Shouting one name!

PROKESCH.

Metternich started?

THE DUKE.

No.
He smiled benignantly, and said, "My Lord,
Why keep your library so out of reach?"
And since that day I've read whate'er I choose.

PROKESCH.

Even "*Le Fils de l'homme?*"

THE DUKE.

Yes.

PROKESCH.

Hateful book!

THE DUKE.

Yes; but it's French and blinded by its hate.
It says they're poisoning me; hints at Locusta
Who poisoned Claudius. If thy Prince is dying,
Wherefore, O France, belittle his disease?
It is no poisoned cup of melodrama
That kills the Duke of Reichstadt! 'Tis his soul!

PROKESCH.

My Lord—!

THE DUKE.

It is my soul! it is my name!
That mighty name, which throbs with guns and bells,
Clashes and thunders, ceaselessly reproaches
Against my languor with its bells and guns!
Silence your tocsins and your salvos! Poison?
What need of poison in the prison-house?
I yearn to broaden history!—I am
A pallid visage watching at a window.
If I could only rid myself of doubt!
You know me well! what do you think of me?
Suppose I were what people say we are
And what we often are, we great men's sons!
Metternich feeds this doubt with frequent hints:
He's right; it is his duty as an Austrian.
I shiver when he opes the bonbonnière
They call his wit, to find some honeyed venom.
You! tell me honestly what is my worth?
You know me; can I be an Emperor?

From this pale brow may God withhold the crown
Unless its pallor's that of Bonaparte!

PROKESCH.

Prince—!

THE DUKE.

Answer me! Must I despise myself?
Speak out! What am I? Are my wits too dull,
And are my wrists too feeble for the sceptre?
What do you think of me?

PROKESCH.

Prince, if all Princes
Struggled with half these torments, doubts, and fears
There would be none but admirable kings.

THE DUKE.

I thank you, Prokesch. Ah! that word consoles me.
To work, my friend!

[*A* LACKEY *brings in a tray full of letters, places them on the table, and goes out.*]

PROKESCH.

Your mail has just arrived.
A load of letters.

THE DUKE.

Yes; from women. These
Reach me unopened.

PROKESCH.

What successes!

THE DUKE.

Yes;
That's what it is to wear the fatal halo.

[*He opens one letter after another; reads the beginning and tears them up.*]

"I saw you in your box last night, how pale—!"

Destroyed! "Oh, that white brow!" Destroyed!
"My Prince,
I saw you riding in the Prater yesterday—"
Destroyed!

PROKESCH.

What, all?

THE DUKE.

"Your youth—" The Canoness.
Destroyed!

[*The door opens gently and* THERESA *comes in.*]

THERESA.

Forgive me.

THE DUKE.

Little Brooklet. You?

THERESA.

Why do you always call me that?

THE DUKE.

'Tis sweet,
'Tis pure. It fits you.

THERESA.

Prince, I go to Parma
To-morrow with your mother.

THE DUKE.

I am sorry.

THERESA.

Parma—

THE DUKE.

The land of violets.

THERESA.

Ah, yes!

THE DUKE.

And if my mother knows not what they stand for
Tell her,

THERESA.

Farewell, my Lord.

THE DUKE.

Go, little Brooklet,
Go on your innocent course.

THERESA.

Why "Little Brooklet"?

THE DUKE.

Because the slumbering depths within your eyes,
The murmur of your voice, so oft refreshed me.

THERESA.

You've nothing more to say?

THE DUKE.

No, nothing more.

THERESA.

Good-bye, my Lord.
[*She goes.*]

THE DUKE.

Destroyed!

PROKESCH.

Ah! I perceive!

THE DUKE.

She loves me—and perhaps—but I must deal
In history and not romances! Come!
To work, my friend! We will resume our tactics.

PROKESCH.

I'll plan an action: you shall criticise it.

THE DUKE.

First give me yonder box upon the couch,
The wooden box with all my wooden soldiers.
I'll work the problem much more easily
Upon our little military chess-board.

PROKESCH.

[*After giving the box to the* DUKE.]
You have to prove my plan is hazardous.

THE DUKE.

[*Putting his hand on the box.*]
These are the soldiers of Napoleon's son!

PROKESCH.

Prince!

THE DUKE.

I'm surrounded with such loving care,
They even paint my soldiers—take them out—
They even paint my wooden soldiers Austrian!
Well! hand me one. We will deploy our left.
[*He takes the soldier* PROKESCH *hands him, and starts on seeing it.*]

PROKESCH.

What is't?

THE DUKE.

One of my father's Grenadiers!
[PROKESCH *hands him another.*]
A Cuirassier!
[*He takes others out of the box.*]
Light Infantry! A scout!
They're all become good Frenchmen! Someone's painted
Each of these little wooden combatants!
[*He takes them all out.*]
They're French! French! French!

PROKESCH.

What miracle is this?

THE DUKE.

I tell you, someone's carved and painted them!

PROKESCH.

Who?

THE DUKE.

And the artist was a soldier!

PROKESCH.

Why?

THE DUKE.

Each coat of regal blue has seven buttons,
The collars are correct, the linings faithful,
The tunics, brandenburghs, and forage-caps,
All's there! The painter never had to pause
To get the edgings and the facings right!
The lace is white, the flaps are triple-pointed!—
Oh, friend, whoe'er you are, with folded hands
I thank you, nameless soldier of my father!
I know not how you worked, nor whence you came,
How you found means, here, in our dismal gaol,
To paint these little mannikins for me.
Who is the hero, little wooden army—
Only a hero would have been so childish—
Who is the hero who equipped you thus
That now you smile at me from all your trappings?
Whose was the loving, microscopic brush
Which gave each tiny face its grim mustache,
Stamped cannon cross-wise on each pouch, and gave
Each officer his bugle or grenade?
Take them all out! The table's covered with them.
Here are the skirmishers, the fugle-men,
The Infantry with shoulder-straps of green.
Take them all out! They're little conquerors!
Oh, Prokesch, look! locked in that little box
Lay sleeping all the glorious *Grande Armée!*
Here are the Mamelukes—I recognize
The crimson breast-piece of the Polish Lancers.
Here are the Sappers with their purple breeches,
And here at last, with different colored leggings,
The Grenadiers of the line with waving plumes

Who marched into the battle with white gaiters;
The Conscripts here, with green and pear-shaped tufts,
Who marched to battle with their gaiters black.
Like a poor prisoner, who falls a-dreaming
Of vast and murmuring forests, with a tree
Fashioned of shavings, taken from a doll's house,
I build my Father's Epic with these soldiers.
[*He moves away from the table.*]
Why, yes, from here I cannot see at all
The little rounds of wood that keep them upright!
This army, Prokesch, when you move away
'Tis but the distance makes it look so small!
[*He comes back quickly.*]
Place them in line for Wagram and for Eylau!
This naked yatagan shall be the water—
[*He takes a sword from the panoply.*]
It is the Danube.
[*He arranges the soldiers.*]
Essling! Yonder's Aspern.
Throw out a paper bridge across the steel.
Pass me a mounted Grenadier or two.

PROKESCH.

We want a little hillock.

THE DUKE.

[*Handing him a book.*]
The "Memorials."
Here stands Saint Cyr, here Molitor of Bellegarde
And on the bridge—

METTERNICH.

[*Who has come in unperceived and is standing behind him.*]
And on the bridge?

THE DUKE.

The Guards.

METTERNICH.

So all the army's French to-day, it seems!
Where are the Austrians?

THE DUKE.

They've run away.

METTERNICH.

Tut, tut—who daubed them over for you?

THE DUKE.

No one.

METTERNICH.

'Twas you. That's how you spoil the toys we give you.

THE DUKE.

Sir—!

[METTERNICH *rings—a* LACKEY *appears.*]

METTERNICH.

[*To the* LACKEY.]
Take these soldiers; throw them all away.
[*To the* DUKE.]
I'll send you new ones.

THE DUKE.

I'll not have your new ones!
If I'm a child, my toys shall be a giant's!

METTERNICH.

What gadfly—what Imperial bee has stung you?

THE DUKE.

As irony is little to my liking—

THE LACKEY.

[*Aside to the* DUKE.]
Silence, my Lord! I'll paint 'em over again.

METTERNICH.

Well, Highness?

THE DUKE.

Nothing. Just a fit of temper.
Forgive me.
[*Aside.*]
I've a friend; I can be patient.

METTERNICH.

I came to bring your friend—

THE DUKE.

My friend?

METTERNICH.

Yes; Marshal Marmont.

THE DUKE.

Oh! Marmont!

METTERNICH.

[*With a look at* PROKESCH.]
He's among the few
I like to see about you—

PROKESCH.

[*Mutters.*]
I should hope so!

METTERNICH.

He's here.

THE DUKE.

Why, let him come!
[METTERNICH *goes out. The* DUKE *throws himself wildly on the couch.*]
My father! Glory!
The Eagles! The Imperial throne! The purple!
[*Suddenly calm, he offers his hand to* MARMONT, *who enters with* METTERNICH.]
Ah, Marshal Marmont! How are *you* to-day?

MARMONT.

My Lord—!

METTERNICH.

[*Anxious to get* PROKESCH *away.*]

Come, Prokesch, come and see how well
The Duke is lodged.

[*He takes him by the arm and leads him off.*]

THE DUKE.

[*After a pause.*]

You've told me all you know
About my Father's youth?

MARMONT.

I have.

THE DUKE.

We'll sum it up.
You'd call him great?

MARMONT.

Oh, very.

THE DUKE.

But 'twas you
Who helped—

MARMONT.

I helped him to avoid—

THE DUKE.

Disaster?

MARMONT.

Well, he believed so stoutly—

THE DUKE.

In his star?

MARMONT.

We perfectly agree in our conclusions.

THE DUKE.

And I suppose he was, as we were saying—

MARMONT.

He was a General of some importance;
Yet it were hardly fair to call him—

THE DUKE.

Wretch!

MARMONT.

What?

THE DUKE.

Now I've learnt whatever you could teach me,
Whatever memories of him you had,
All that, in spite of you, was splendid in you.
I cast you off: a useless sponge!

MARMONT.

My Lord!

THE DUKE.

Duke of Ragusa, you betrayed him! You!
Ah, yes, I know, when you beheld your comrade
Climbing the throne you all said, "Why not I?"
But you, whom even in the ranks he loved,
And loved so well his men grew discontented,
Created Marshal at the age of thirty—

MARMONT.

No; thirty-five.

THE DUKE.

You, traitor of Essonnes,
The mob has found new uses for your name
And coined a verb "*Raguser*," to betray!
Why do you stand there silent? Answer me.
'Tis not alone Prince Francis Charles, it is
Napoleon the Second speaking to you.

MARMONT.

[*Listening.*]
They come—Prince Metternich—I know his voice.

THE DUKE.

Well! you know what to do. Betray us twice!

METTERNICH.

[*Entering with* PROKESCH.]
Don't interrupt your chat. I'm taking Prokesch
Across the park to see the Roman ruins
Where I propose to give a ball. I am
The last survivor of a crumbling world.
I like the idea of dancing over ruins.
Good-night.

[*He goes out with* PROKESCH.]

MARMONT.

My Lord, you see I held my peace.

THE DUKE.

It only needed that you should *raguse.*

MARMONT.

Oh, conjugate the verb! I'll take a seat.

THE DUKE.

What!

MARMONT.

I will let you conjugate the verb
Because you were magnificent just now.

THE DUKE.

Sir!

MARMONT.

I have spoken evil of your Father
These fifteen years. I do so still; 'tis true.
Can you not guess I seek to excuse myself?
I never saw your Father after Elba—
If I had seen him I should have returned.
Others betrayed him, thinking to save France;
But these beheld his face again, and fell
Under the spell, as I have fallen to-night.

THE DUKE.

Why, sir?

MARMONT.

I also have beheld his face.

THE DUKE.

How?

MARMONT.

In that frown, and in that haughty gesture;
The sparkling eye! Insult me. I remain.

THE DUKE.

Almost you have atoned if that be true,
Saved me from self-distrust which these exploit.
What? With my gloomy brow and narrow chest—?

MARMONT.

I have beheld him!

THE DUKE.

Dare I hope again?
Dare I forgive you? Why did you betray him?

MARMONT.

My Lord—!

THE DUKE.

Why? You—and others?

MARMONT.

We were weary.
Can you not understand? No peace in Europe.
It's well to conquer, but one wants to live!
Berlin, Vienna, never, never Paris!
Beginning and beginning and beginning,
Again, and yet again as in a nightmare;
Forever and forever in the saddle
Till we were sick of it!

THE LACKEY.

[*Having taken out the wooden soldiers and come back.*

What about us?

THE DUKE AND MARMONT.

Eh?

THE LACKEY.

Us, the men, the mean, the rank and file?
Us, tramping broken, wounded, muddy, dying,
Having no hope of duchies or endowments,
Marching along and never getting further,
Too simple and too ignorant to covet
The famous marshal's baton in our knapsacks?
What about us, who marched through every weather,
Sweating but fearless, shivering without trembling,
Kept on our feet by trumpet-calls, by fever,
And by the songs we sang through conquered countries?
Us upon whom for seventeen years—just think!—
The knapsack, sabre, turn-screw, flint, and gun,
Beside the burden of an empty belly,
Made the sweet weight of five and fifty pounds?
Us, who wore bearskins in the burning tropics
And marched bareheaded through the snows of Russia,
Who trotted casually from Spain to Austria?
Us who, to free our travel-weary legs,
Like carrots from the slough of miry roads,
Often with both hands had to lug them out?
Us, who, not having jujubes for our coughs,
Took day-long foot-baths in the freezing Danube?
Who just had leisure when some officer
Came riding up, and gayly cried "To arms!
The enemy is on us! Drive him back!"
To eat a slice of rook—and raw at that,
Or quickly mix a delicate ice-cream
With melted snow and a dead horse's blood?
Us, who—

THE DUKE.

At last!

THE LACKEY.

At night had little fear
Of bullets, but a holy dread of waking
Cannibals; us—

THE DUKE.

At last—!

THE LACKEY.

Who marched and fought
Fasting, and only stopped—

THE DUKE.

At last I see one!

THE LACKEY.

To fight—and then stopped fighting, four to one,
Only to march; and stopped again to fight!
Marching and fighting, naked, starved, but merry—
Don't you suppose we, too, were sick of it?

MARMONT.

But—

THE LACKEY.

Though we owed him precious little thanks,
Nevertheless 'twas we whose hearts were true,
While you were ambling at the King's right hand.
In short, your Highness, in the great canteen,
Where souls are fed on glory, he may find
[*Pointing to* MARMONT.]
His laurels are not worth our small potatoes.

MARMONT.

Who is this Lackey with the veteran's growl?

THE LACKEY.

John Seraph Peter Flambeau, called Flambart—
"The glowing coal"—ex-sergeant grenadier.
Mamma from Picardy; Papa a Breton.
Joined at fourteen, two Germinal, year Three.
Baptised, Marengo; got my corporal's stripes

The fifteenth Fructidor, year Twelve. Silk hose
And sergeant's cane, steeped in my tears of joy.
July fourteenth, year Eighteen hundred and nine,
At Schönbrunn, for the Guards were here to serve
The sacred person of your Majesty.
Sixteen years' service, seen sixteen campaigns,
Fought Austerlitz, fought Eylau, Somo-Siera,
Eckmühl, Essling, Wagram, Smolensk, and so forth.
Thirty-two feats of arms, a lot of wounds,
And only fought for glory and dry bread.

MARMONT.

Surely you will not listen to him thus?

THE DUKE.

No, sir, I will not listen thus, but standing!

MARMONT.

My Lord!

THE DUKE.

For in the volume whose sublime
Chapters are headed with proud capitals
You are the titles and you catch the eye;
But these—these are the thousand little letters—
You're nought, without the black and humble army
That goes to make a page of history.
Oh, my brave Flambeau, painter of my soldiers,
To think while you were near me all this month,
I only looked upon you as a spy.

FLAMBEAU.

Oh, our acquaintance dates much further back!

THE DUKE.

How so?

FLAMBEAU.

Can't you recall me?

THE DUKE.

Not at all.

FLAMBEAU.

One Thursday in the garden of Saint Cloud
Marshal Duroc stood with a maid-in-waiting,
Watching your Highness at his nurse's breast—
Its whiteness, I remember, startled me.
Marshal Duroc exclaimed, "Come here!" I came.
But there were lots of things to make me nervous:
The Imperial child, the gorgeous rosy sleeves
The Maid of honor wore, Duroc, the breast—
In short, the tuft was shivering on my bearskin;
So much so that your Highness noticed it.
You gazed upon it pensively: what was it?
And while you hailed it with a milky laugh
You seemed uncertain which to admire the more
About this moving scarlet miracle:
Its motion, or the fact that it was scarlet.
Suddenly, while I stooped, your little hands
Began to pull the precious tuft about.
Seeing my plight, the Marshal cried severely,
"Don't interfere"—I didn't interfere;
But having sunk upon my knees I heard
The nurse, the marshal, and the lady laughing.
And when I rose the grass was strewn with red:
As for my tuft, that was a beardless wire.
"I'll sign an order," said Duroc, "for two."
Back to my quarters then I strutted radiant;
"You there! hulloa!" exclaimed the Adjutant,
"Who's plucked you?" And I cried: "The King of Rome!"
And that is how one Thursday morn I met
Your Majesty. Your Highness has developed.

THE DUKE.

No, not developed: that is why I grieve.
My "Majesty" has shrivelled to my "Highness."

MARMONT.

[*To* FLAMBEAU.]
But since the Empire fell, what have you done?

FLAMBEAU.

I think I've acted like a decent beggar.
I know Fournier and Solignac. In May
Eighteen-sixteen Didier and Sarlovèze
Conspire and fail. I see the child Miard
Perish, and David the old man, and weep;
They'd have beheaded me, but I am missing.
Good. I come back to Paris with an alias;
I smash a footstool on a royal guard
Because he'd trodden on my favorite corn.
I take the chair at noisy drinking bouts,
Spend thirty pence a month. I nurse a hope
That in the Var that Other still may land.
I swagger in a Bonapartist hat
And call whoever stares at me a vampire.
I fight some thirty duels. I conspire
At Béziers; fail. They'd have beheaded me,
But I am missing. Good. I join at once
The plot at Lyons. All are seized. I fly.
They'd have beheaded me, but I am missing.
So I come back to Paris, where, by chance,
I find myself mixed up in the Bazaar plot.
Lefèvre-Desnouettes is in America.
I join him there. "What's up, my General?"
Says I. Says he, "Come back." We start; we're
wrecked.
My General's drowned, but I know how to swim;
And so I swim, bewailing Desnouettes.
Good. Very good. Sun—azure waves—and sea-mews.
A ship. They fish me up. I land in time
To be among the plotters of Saumur.
We fail again. They'd have beheaded me,

But I am missing. So I make for Greece,
To rub the rust off, thrashing dirty Turks.
One morning in July I'm back in France.
I see them heaping paving stones. I help.
I fight. At night the tricolor is hoisted,
Instead of the white banner of the King,
But as I think there still is something lacking
To crown the point of that disloyal staff;
You know—the golden thing that beats its wings.
I leave, to plot in the Romagna. Fail.
A relative of yours—

THE DUKE.
Named?

FLAMBEAU.
Camerata—
Makes me her fencing master—

THE DUKE.
Ah!

FLAMBEAU.
In Tuscany.
So we conspire with singlestick and rapier.
Next there's a post of danger vacant here;
They give me forged credentials; here I am.
I'm here; but every day I see the Countess,
For I have found the cave your Highness dug
With your preceptor Colin in the garden
To play at little Robinson. All right!
I hide in it. I find it has two openings:
This in an ant-heap; that, a bed of nettles.
I wait. Your cousin brings her sketch-book, and
There in the shadow of the Roman thingummies,
She on her camp-stool, I amid the mud,
She looking like an English tourist sketching,
I whispering from my cavern like a prompter,
We plan the means to make you Emperor.

THE DUKE.

And for such loyalty, so long maintained,
What do you ask of me?

FLAMBEAU.

Just pull my ear.

THE DUKE.

What?

FLAMBEAU.

As your Father used to when we'd pleased him.

THE DUKE.

But I—

FLAMBEAU.

I'm waiting. Come. The thumb and index.
[THE DUKE *pulls his ear.*]
That's not the way to pull an ear, my Lord!
You don't know how: you're much too gentlemanly.

THE DUKE.

Ah, do you think so?

MARMONT.

Clumsy thing to say!

FLAMBEAU.

Well, in a French Prince that's but half a fault.

THE DUKE.

But can you see I'm French in these surroundings?

FLAMBEAU.

Yes, you don't match. It's rich; it's heavy.

MARMONT.

What!
Can you see that?

FLAMBEAU.

My brother's an upholsterer.
He works in Paris for Fontaine and Percier—

They try to imitate us here; but, Lord!
They've got a curious kind of Louis-Quinze!
I'm not an expert, but I've got an eye.
[*He lifts up a chair.*]
Just look how finnicking this wood-work is.
[*He puts it down and looks at it.*]
But then the tapestry! What taste! what mystery!
It sings. It laughs. It crushes all the room.
Why? Don't you know? Why, these are Gobelins!
How plain it is that cunning craftsmen made them.
This taste, this elegance swears with the rest—
And you my Lord, were also made in France!

MARMONT.

He must go back.

FLAMBEAU.

And on the Cross of Honor
Once more engrave a little Emperor.

THE DUKE.

Whom have they put there now?

FLAMBEAU.

Henry the Fourth—
Well, damn it all, it had to be a fighter!
But, *basta!* How Napoleon must laugh
To wear King Henry's mask upon his face!
Haven't you ever seen the cross?

THE DUKE.

In shops.

FLAMBEAU.

My Lord, it must be seen upon a breast,
Here on the cloth, a gout of ardent blood,
Which fell, and falling turned to burnished gold
And to enamel with an edge of green;
'Twas like a jewel pouring from a wound.

THE DUKE.

It must have looked magnificent, my friend,
Here on your bosom.

FLAMBEAU.

I?—I never had it.

THE DUKE.

What! After all your modest heroism?

FLAMBEAU.

One had to do far greater deeds to win it.

THE DUKE.

You made no claim?

FLAMBEAU.

The Little Corporal
Didn't bestow it; so I hadn't earned it.

THE DUKE.

Then I, who have no power, no throne, no title,
I, who am but a memory in a phantom,
That Duke of Reichstadt who with helpless grief
Can only wander under Austrian trees,
Carving an N upon their mossy trunks,
Wayfarer, only noticed when I cough;
Who have no longer even the little piece
Of watered silk so scarlet in my cradle;
I, on whose woes they vainly lavish stars,
Who only wear two crosses, not the One!
I, exiled, prisoner, sick, who may not ride
Along the front of pompous regiments
Scattering stars among my heroes; yet
I hope—I think—the son of such a father—
Into whose hands a firmament was given—
I think, in spite of shadows and dead days,
A little of the star clings to my fingers:—
John Seraph Peter Flambeau, I adorn you!

FLAMBEAU.

You!

THE DUKE.

Oh, this ribbon is not real.

FLAMBEAU.

The real
Is that we weep in taking. I have wept.

MARMONT.

Besides, it must be legalized in Paris.

THE DUKE.

But how to get to Paris?

FLAMBEAU.

Pack your trunk.

THE DUKE.

Alas!

FLAMBEAU.

No more "Alas." To-day's the Ninth,
And if you'd like to be on the Pont-Neuf
The Thirtieth—you'll be there if you like—
Come to the ball to-morrow given by Nepomuk.

THE DUKE AND MARMONT.

By whom?

FLAMBEAU.

Prince Metternich (Clement Lothair
Wenceslas Nepomuk). Come. No more "Alas!"

MARMONT.

You utter dangerous secrets in my presence!

FLAMBEAU.

You'll not betray a plot in which you share.

THE DUKE.

Not Marmont!

MARMONT.

Yes, I'm with you.

[*To* FLAMBEAU.]

All the same

You didn't use much flattery to win me;
You gave me quite a warm reception.

FLAMBEAU.

Yes;

And won a warm reception for myself.

MARMONT.

Very imprudent.

FLAMBEAU.

True, but then my failing
Is ever overdoing things a little.
I always add a trifle to my orders
And wear a rose-bud when I go to battle:
My little joke.

MARMONT.

So if the Camerata
Cares to employ me—

THE DUKE.

No! not Marmont!

FLAMBEAU.

Pooh!

Let him redeem himself!

THE DUKE.

No!

MARMONT.

I have lists
Carefully made, of all the malcontents;
Maison, the French Ambassador, is my friend.

FLAMBEAU.

Oh, he can serve us.

THE DUKE.

Compromises! No!
I'll not let Marmont consecrate himself!

MARMONT.

When you are crowned, my Lord, I will obey you.
Meanwhile I'll go at once to General Maison.
[MARMONT *goes out.*]

FLAMBEAU.

That venerable rascal's in the right.

THE DUKE.

So be it, then! I'll come. But where's the proof
That France still feels herself my Father's widow?
Oh, Flambeau, time has passed; the ancient love
These worthy people bore us must have died.

FLAMBEAU.

Their love of you, my Lord? Why that's immortal!
[*He takes from about his person the various articles mentioned in the following scene.*]

THE DUKE.

Why, Flambeau, what is that?

FLAMBEAU.

A pair of braces.

THE DUKE.

Have you gone mad?

FLAMBEAU.

Just look and see what's on 'em!

THE DUKE.

My portrait!

FLAMBEAU.

Worn by quite a decent class.

THE DUKE.

But Flambeau—

FLAMBEAU.
Will you take a pinch of snuff?

THE DUKE.
I—

FLAMBEAU.
On the box a little curly head.

THE DUKE.
'Tis I!

FLAMBEAU.
And what about this handkerchief?
Eh! Not so bad, the little King of Rome?

THE DUKE.
But—

FLAMBEAU.
Colored print to paste upon your walls.

THE DUKE.
Again! on horseback!

FLAMBEAU.
Yes, and caracolling.
How d'you like this pipe?

THE DUKE.
But tell me, Flambeau—

FLAMBEAU.
You cannot say they haven't drawn you handsome!

THE DUKE.
I—

FLAMBEAU.
A cockade, to tease the government.

THE DUKE.
What's that?

FLAMBEAU.
A medal. Trivial fancy goods.

THE DUKE.

Still I?

FLAMBEAU.

Still you. Look here, what words are ground
Upon this tumbler?

THE DUKE.

"Francis, Duke of Reichstadt."

FLAMBEAU.

Of course you can't get on without a plate—

THE DUKE.

A plate?

FLAMBEAU.

A knife, a napkin-ring, an egg-cup.
They've made you look so happy on the egg-cup!
The table's laid, my Lord: my Lord is served!

THE DUKE.

[*With increasing emotion.*]
Flambeau—

FLAMBEAU.

On everything. Here's a cravat
In which you're woven riding in the clouds;
And playing cards of which you're Ace of Spades—

THE DUKE.

Flambeau!

FLAMBEAU.

And Almanacs—

THE DUKE.

Flambeau!

FLAMBEAU.

And everything!

THE DUKE.

Flambeau!

FLAMBEAU.

What, weeping? Take this handkerchief
And dry your eyes upon the King of Rome!

[*He kneels by the* DUKE'S *side and wipes his eyes with the handkerchief.*]

I bid you strike the iron while it's hot:
You've got the people and you've got the Marshals,
The King, the King himself, is only King
On one condition: that he's Bonapartist.
Vainly the Gallic cockerel spreads his wings
That, from a distance, he may seem an eagle.
We Frenchmen cannot breathe inglorious air;
The crown must slip from off a pear-shaped head.
The youth of France will rally to your side
Merrily shouting songs of Béranger—
The street has shuddered and the pavement trembled,
And Schönbrunn's not so pretty as Versailles!

THE DUKE.

I will accept.

[*Military music is heard.*]

Ha!

FLAMBEAU.

[*At the window.*]

In the Court of honor
The trumpets of the Guard. The Emperor
Is coming home.

THE DUKE.

My grandfather! My promise!

[*To* FLAMBEAU.]

No; before accepting—

FLAMBEAU.

Damn it!

THE DUKE.

Listen!
I must make one attempt with him; but if

When you are here on guard to-night, you see
Something—that you're not used to seeing here—
It is a signal! I will fly.

FLAMBEAU.

Latude!
What will the signal be?

THE DUKE.

You'll see.

FLAMBEAU.

But if—

[*An officer of the Noble Guard enters.*]

THE OFFICER.

My Lord—

FLAMBEAU.

[*Taking stock of him.*]
The beggars! Aren't they gorgeous swells!

THE DUKE.

Well?

THE OFFICER.

As the Emperor passed, they came and said,
"O Sire, this is the one day in the week
Whereon your Majesty receives his subjects;
Many have come from far—" "I'd thought of it,"
Replied the Emperor, smiling; "and I hope
To see them. I'm at Schönbrunn as a grandfather,
I shall be with the Duke from five to six:
Let all my children be beside my grandson."
May they come up?

THE DUKE.

Yes! open all the doors!

[*The* OFFICER *goes out.*]

THE DUKE.

[*To* FLAMBEAU.]
Now quickly make a bundle of these treasures.
I'll look at them at leisure in my room.

FLAMBEAU.

I make the bundle in the handkerchief.
But tell me what the signal is to be.

THE DUKE.

Oh, never fear! you will not fail to know it.
But—do you hear them? That's the Austrian Hymn.

FLAMBEAU.

My word! It isn't worth the Marseillaise!

THE DUKE.

The Marseillaise—well? have you tied the ends?
My father used to say it wore mustachios.

FLAMBEAU.

Their blessed national hymn has scented whiskers.

THE DUKE.

It wouldn't be bad fun to enter France,
Thus, with my bundle on my back, on foot.

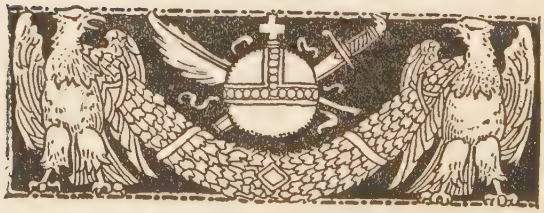
FLAMBEAU.

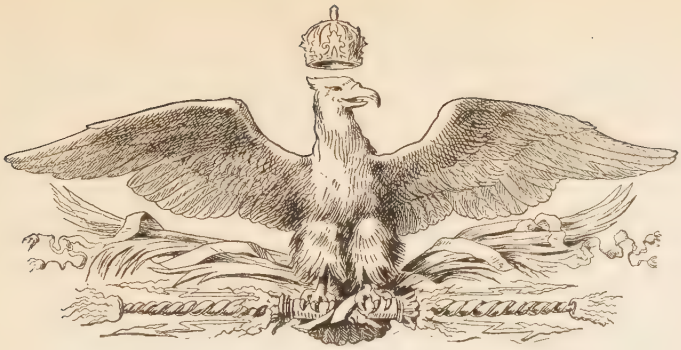
How cheerful and how funny you can be!
This is the first time I have seen you so.

THE DUKE.

What? Rather young and merry? Thank you, Flambeau.

CURTAIN.





THE THIRD ACT

Scene: The same as in the previous act.
A miscellaneous crowd of men, women and children are discovered on the rising of the curtain. They are being placed in order by an OFFICER.

THE OFFICER.

LINE up. Be quiet. Boy, behave yourself.
The Emperor enters here; so leave a passage.
You, giant highlander, don't scrape your feet.

A MAN.

Will he pass here?

THE OFFICER.

Yes; and he'll take your papers.
Hold your petitions so that he can see them.
No tedious twaddle—Ah!—and you're forbidden
To kneel when he comes in.

A WOMAN.

Forbidden or not,
That won't prevent us—

[*The* EMPEROR *enters quite simply, without being announced. All the people, in spite of the warning, fall on their knees.*]

THE EMPEROR.

Rise, my children, rise.

[*He passes from one to the other, taking their papers. To a* WOMAN.]

Your pension's doubled.

THE WOMAN.

Sire!

THE EMPEROR.

[*To a* MAN.]

What? What? A team

Of oxen? That's expensive!—Granted.

THE MAN.

Father!

THE EMPEROR.

[*Reading another paper.*]

Granted.

A WOMAN.

Father Franz—

THE EMPEROR.

What, you? All well

At home?

THE WOMAN.

Oh, so-so.

THE EMPEROR.

Well, old woman? Well?

THE OLD WOMAN.

Why, don't you see, the wind has killed my chickens.

THE EMPEROR.

Granted.—A vocalist?

THE VOCALIST.

I yodle.

THE EMPEROR.

Come

And yodle to the Court at Baden.

THE CHAMBERLAIN.

Name?

THE VOCALIST.

Schnauser.

THE EMPEROR.

A Highlander?

THE HIGHLANDER.

Out yonder
My home is, on the mountains, in the skies.
I want to be a cabman in Vienna.

THE EMPEROR.

Well, so you shall.
[*Taking another paper.*]
A wealthy husbandman
Begs Franz to give him back his daughter's love
Which a Bohemian glass-blower has stolen.
[*Handing back the paper.*]
You'll wed your child to her Bohemian lover.

THE HUSBANDMAN.

But—

THE EMPEROR.

I'll endow him.

THE CHAMBERLAIN.

Name?

THE HUSBANDMAN.

Johannes Schmoll.
I kiss your hands.

THE EMPEROR.

[*Taking another paper.*]
"A shepherd of the Tyrol,
A friendless orphan, robbed of all his land,
Driven from his homestead by his father's foes,
Yearns for his native woods and skies"—how touching!—
"And his paternal meadow." 'Tis restored.

THE CHAMBERLAIN.

What is the shepherd's name, who asks for help?

THE SHEPHERD.

The Duke of Reichstadt! And the meadow's France!

THE EMPEROR.

[*To the* PETITIONERS.]
Begone!
[*All go.*]
What's this?

THE DUKE.

It seems if I were only
A mountain shepherd or a forester,
With nothing to attract your notice, Sire,
Save a cock's feather in my huntsman's hat,
You would have drawn me to your melting heart.

THE EMPEROR.

But Franz—!

THE DUKE.

Ah, now I know why all your subjects,
All those who are unhappy, call themselves
Your sons as much as we; but is it just,
Sire, is it just, that I, when I'm unhappy,
Have less of kinship than the least of these?

THE EMPEROR.

But why just now—for I must scold you, sir—
When I was busy with these wretched people—
Why come to me just now, and not in private?

THE DUKE.

I wished to find you when your heart was open.

THE EMPEROR.

My heart—my heart!—You're somewhat over-bold!

THE DUKE.

I know that you can do the thing I ask,
That I am wretched almost past endurance,
And that you are my Grandfather—that's all.

THE EMPEROR.

But there is Europe—England—above all,
There's Metternich.

THE DUKE.

You are my Grandfather.

THE EMPEROR.

You don't know half the difficulties.

THE DUKE.

But
I am the grandson of your Majesty.

THE EMPEROR.

But—

THE DUKE.

Sire, in whom alone I place my trust,
Be Grandfather a little while!

THE EMPEROR.

But I—

THE DUKE.

Just for a moment drop the Emperor.

THE EMPEROR.

Ah, what a coaxing way you always had.

THE DUKE.

You know I cannot bear you when you look
Like the great portrait hanging in the throne-room,
With the ermine cloak and Golden Fleece upon you;
But here, like this, I like you very much,
With the dear silver of your floating hair,
Your kindly eyes, your simple coat and waistcoat;
For now you're just a dear old gentleman,
By whom a grandchild might be petted.

THE EMPEROR.

Petted!

THE DUKE.

Are you not bored to see the heavy jowls
Of Louis-Philip on the coins of France?

THE EMPEROR.

Hush! hush!

THE DUKE.

Do you adore these podgy Bourbons?

THE EMPEROR.

You are not like your cousins the Archdukes.

THE DUKE.

Indeed?

THE EMPEROR.

Where did you learn your saucy tricks?

THE DUKE.

I learnt them playing in the Tuileries.

THE EMPEROR.

Ah, you come back to that?

THE DUKE.

I wish I could.

THE EMPEROR.

Can you recall those days?

THE DUKE.

Oh, only vaguely.

THE EMPEROR.

Can you recall your father?

THE DUKE.

I remember
A man who pressed me hard against a star,
And as he pressed I felt with tears of fright
The diamond star was stamped upon my heart:
Sire, it has stayed there!

THE EMPEROR.

Do I blame you for it?

THE DUKE.

Yes, let the goodness of your nature speak!
When I was small you loved me, did you not?
You loved to have me with you at your meals,
And so we used to dine together—

THE EMPEROR.

Charming.

THE DUKE.

My hair was long, and I was Prince of Parma;
And when they punished me you let me off.

THE EMPEROR.

Do you remember how you hated ponies?

THE DUKE.

One day they showed me one as white as snow;
I stamped with fury in the riding-school.

THE EMPEROR.

You thought a pony was a deadly insult.

THE DUKE.

I cried with rage: I want a great, big horse!

THE EMPEROR.

And now you want another great, big horse!

THE DUKE.

And how I used to beat my German nurses.

THE EMPEROR.

And how with Colin you would calmly dig
Enormous holes about my park—

THE DUKE.

For Crusoe.

THE EMPEROR.

He was Man Friday.

THE DUKE.

And I used to hide.
I had a gun, three hatchets and a bow.

THE EMPEROR.

Then you stood sentinel before my door.

THE DUKE.

As a hussar.

THE EMPEROR.

And ladies, coming late,
Found this excuse quite natural:—"Oh, Sire,
We only stopped to kiss the sentinel!"

THE DUKE.

You loved me then.

THE EMPEROR.

I love you now.

THE DUKE.

Then prove it!

THE EMPEROR.

My Franz! my grandson!

THE DUKE.

Is it true the King
Would simply disappear if I appeared?

THE EMPEROR.

Well—

THE DUKE.

Is it true?

THE EMPEROR.

I—

THE DUKE.

Don't tell lies!

THE EMPEROR.

Perhaps!

THE DUKE.

I love you!

THE EMPEROR.

Yes; if you appeared alone,
Without a drum, upon the bridge at Strassburg,
The King would vanish.

THE DUKE.

I adore you, Grandad!

THE EMPEROR.

I'm stifled!

THE DUKE.

No.

THE EMPEROR.

I should have held my tongue.

THE DUKE.

Besides, the climate of Vienna's bad:
I'm ordered Paris—

THE EMPEROR.

Really?

THE DUKE.

For my cough.
If I'm to spend a season there, of course
I can't stop anywhere but at the Louvre.

THE EMPEROR.

Indeed!

THE DUKE.

And if you liked—

THE EMPEROR.

They've often begged us
To wink at your escaping—

THE DUKE.

Wink at once!

THE EMPEROR.

Oh, for all me—

THE DUKE.

There's no one else.

THE EMPEROR.

I'll think.

THE DUKE.

Don't think! Don't think those horrid second thoughts!
Consult your feelings only, and your heart.
'Twould be so pretty if an Emperor once
Upset all history to spoil his grandson.
And then it's something, something rather fine,
If you can just remark quite innocently,
You know: "My Grandson, Emperor of the French."

THE EMPEROR.

Certainly.

THE DUKE.

And you'll say it! Say you'll say it!

THE EMPEROR.

Well—

THE DUKE.

Speak, Sire!

THE EMPEROR.

Yes, then—Sire!

THE DUKE.

Ah, Sire!

[*They salute each other as equals.*]

THE EMPEROR.

Sire!

THE DUKE.

Sire!

[*A door opens.*]

THE EMPEROR.

Metternich. Have no fear; I'll—

THE DUKE.

All is lost!

[*Enter* METTERNICH.]

THE EMPEROR.

It is my will this child shall reign.

METTERNICH.

Delightful.

I'll tell your partisans at once.

THE DUKE.

I feared.

THE EMPEROR.

What should you fear? Am I not master here?

THE DUKE.

Whom will you send me as Ambassador?

METTERNICH.

Delightful.

THE DUKE.

And you'll visit me in state?

THE EMPEROR.

Yes, very likely; when the chambers rise.

METTERNICH.

We'll only ask some trifling guarantees.

THE DUKE.

Ask what you like.

THE EMPEROR.

Well? are you happy?

METTERNICH.

First

We'll come to terms on trivial points of detail:
Certain seditious groups should be dissolved:
Our neighbors must not harbor thunderbolts.

THE DUKE.

Dear grandfather!

METTERNICH.

Ah—then we're very weary
Of hearing of the Heroes of July.

THE DUKE.

But—

METTERNICH.

Now the imperialists and radicals
Are linked: we'll cut the link; we cannot favor
The dangerous modern spirit. We'll expel
Lammenais.

THE DUKE.

But—

METTERNICH.

And Chateaubriand. Ah—
We'll also put a muzzle on the press.

THE DUKE.

Oh, there's no hurry.

THE EMPEROR.

Pardon me, there is.

THE DUKE.

Pardon me, that's attacking freedom.

THE EMPEROR.

Freedom!

METTERNICH.

Ah—we must have free hand in Italy.
Ah—not so much excitement about Poland.

THE DUKE.

Ah? And what else?

METTERNICH.

Well, we shall have to solve
The question of the names. You know, the names

Of battles, Sire, which you—well—did not win:
The Marshals must not wear them.

THE DUKE.

What is that?

THE EMPEROR.

Perhaps—

METTERNICH.

Forgive me; but they must not think
They're lords of Austrian places; and you cannot
Approve their way of carrying off to France
Our villages by means of upstart titles.

THE DUKE.

Grandfather! Grandfather!

THE EMPEROR.

Well—it's evident—

THE DUKE.

Yet you and I were in each other's arms!
[*To* METTERNICH.]
And have you nothing further to demand?

METTERNICH.

Yes; the suppression of the Tricolor.

THE DUKE.

Your Excellency wishes me to wash
The banner based in blood and crowned with heaven—
For it was dipped in horrors that bear fruit,
And it was bathed in universal hopes!—
Your Excellency asks me to efface
That gleam of heaven and that stain of blood,
And, having nothing but a blank sheet left,
To make a shroud for Freedom out of that!

THE EMPEROR.

Freedom again!

THE DUKE.

Upon my father's side
I am related closely, Sire, to Freedom.

METTERNICH.

Yes, the Duke's grandsire was the eighteenth Brumaire!

THE DUKE.

Yes, and the Revolution was my granddam!

THE EMPEROR.

Silence!

METTERNICH.

The Emperor a republican!
Utopia!—Play the Marseillaise in A
On trumpets, while the sentimental flute
Sighs "God preserve the Empire" in E flat.

THE DUKE.

The two go very well together, sir,
And make a tune that frightens Kings away!

THE EMPEROR.

This to my face? How dare you, sir? How dare you?

THE DUKE.

Ah, now I know what is expected of me!

THE EMPEROR.

What does it mean? What is the matter with him?

THE DUKE.

I am to be an Austrian Archduke
On a French throne!

THE EMPEROR.

What has he read or seen?

THE DUKE.

I have seen egg-cups, handkerchiefs, and pipes!

THE EMPEROR.

He's mad! The words he utters are a madman's!

THE DUKE.

Mad to have thought you'd help me to my own.

METTERNICH.

'Tis you alone obstruct your going home.

THE DUKE.

Yes, in a gig instead of on a gun!

THE EMPEROR.

You shall not go at all!

THE DUKE.

A cage?

THE EMPEROR.

We'll see!

THE DUKE.

For all your cages I am still the Eaglet!

THE EMPEROR.

The eagle on my flag has many eaglets:
You're one of them: that's all.

THE DUKE.

Oh, gloomy eagle!
Sad, double-headed fowl, with heavy eye:
Eagle of Austria, cruel bird of night!
A glorious eagle of the dawn has passed
Athwart thine eyrie, and with ruffled feathers,
Raging and terror-stricken, thou beholdest
One of thine eaglets sprouting golden plumage!

THE EMPEROR.

My heart was softening: I regret my tears.
These books and weapons shall be taken from you.
Dietrichstein!

METTERNICH.
He is not in the palace.

THE EMPEROR.
Poor, morbid child, we will suppress whatever
Too much reminds you who your father was.

THE DUKE.
Then you must root up every violet,
Drive every single bee out of your park!

THE EMPEROR.
Change all the servants!

METTERNICH.
I'll dismiss them all:
Otto, Fritz, Hermann, Albrecht—

THE DUKE.
Close the shutters,
Lest yonder star remind me of my father's.

THE EMPEROR.
And as for Dietrichstein, I'll sign at once
New regulations—
[*To* METTERNICH.]
Write.

METTERNICH.
Where is the ink?

THE DUKE.
My inkstand's on the table; you may use it.

METTERNICH.
Where? I see nothing!

THE DUKE.
The Minerva's head,
In bronze and marble.

METTERNICH.
Still I cannot see it.

THE DUKE.

Then take the other, made of burnished gold,
On yonder console—

METTERNICH.

Where?

THE EMPEROR.

What inkstands?

THE DUKE.

Sire,
Those which my father left me.

THE EMPEROR.

What do you mean?

THE DUKE.

Yes! in his testament! And there, the pistols,
Four pistols of Versailles. Take them away.

THE EMPEROR.

[*Bringing his fist down on the table.*]
What's this?

THE DUKE.

You must not hit the table, Sire!
Now you've knocked down the sword he wore as Consul!

THE EMPEROR.

These things you speak of—

THE DUKE.

Are before my eyes!
"They are to be surrendered to my son
When he has reached sixteen." Despite the crime
Which holds them back, they're mine: I have their soul!
The soul of every cross, of every jewel,
And all is here: the three mahogany caskets,
And all the snuff-boxes, and all the spurs,

The golden garter-buckles and the gorgets,
I've all! The iron sword, the enamelled sword,
The sword in which a never-setting sun
Has left its fires imprisoned, so that none
May dare to draw it lest the sun leap forth;
I have the sword-belts also, all the six!

THE EMPEROR.

Silence!

THE DUKE.

"To be surrendered to my son
When he has reached sixteen." Oh, Father, sleep,
For I have all; even your uniforms.
Oh, yes! To you my uniform looks white—
Well, it's not true—it's false—I am pretending!
Father, behold, it's blue and red, behold!
Colonel? Not so! Lieutenant in your Guard!
By the device your soldiers bore I know it,
Father, who gave me victories for sisters!
'Twas not in vain you wished me to possess
The alarm-clock of King Frederick of Prussia,
Which you magnificently stole from Potsdam,
For here it is! 'Tis ticking in my brain!
It is the clock which wakes me every morning,
Drives me exhausted by my midnight toil
Back to my narrow table, to my toil,
To be more fit by night-fall for the throne!

THE EMPEROR.

The throne! the throne! Oh, never hope again
That you may reign in France, you—Upstart's son,
Because our nobler blood has made you look
Rather more kingly than your father was.

THE DUKE.

Forgive me, but at Dresden, you remember,
You all appeared like lackeys of my father.

THE EMPEROR.
A common soldier!

THE DUKE.
He had but to ask
And Emperors gave their daughters to this soldier.

THE EMPEROR.
Perhaps. I cannot say. Mine is a widow.

THE DUKE.
Pity I'm here as living evidence!

THE EMPEROR.
Have you forgotten how we loved each other?

THE DUKE.
No! No! My birth is proof that you were beaten!
No! you can only hate me; for I am
Wagram personified before your eyes!

THE EMPEROR.
Out of my sight! Begone!
[*Exit the* DUKE.]
The child I loved!

METTERNICH.
Well, Sire, is he to have an empire?

THE EMPEROR.
Never!

METTERNICH.
Do you perceive what I have saved you from?

THE EMPEROR.
Ah! did you hear the monstrous things he said?

METTERNICH.
We must subdue him.

THE EMPEROR.
For his own sake; yes.

METTERNICH.

For the world's peace and yours.

THE EMPEROR.

We must subdue him.

METTERNICH.

I'll come and speak to him to-night.

THE EMPEROR.

What grief
He gives me!

METTERNICH.

[*Trying to lead him away.*]
Come.

THE EMPEROR.

You'll speak to-night?

METTERNICH.

This scene
Must never be repeated.

THE EMPEROR.

It has hurt me.
Unhappy child!

METTERNICH.

[*Leading him off.*]
Come, Sire.

THE EMPEROR.

[*Without.*]
The child—

[*His voice dies away.*]

[*The* DUKE *opens his door very gently, sees they are gone, listens a moment, then enters quickly and places one of Napoleon's little hats on the table.*]

THE DUKE.

The signal!

[*He returns to his room.*]

[FLAMBEAU *enters.*]

FLAMBEAU.

'Tis time. Well, signal? Are you here?—Perhaps.
[*He hunts for it.*]
"Flambeau," he said, "you cannot fail to find it."
Now, is it high or low, or black or white?
Or great or small?
[*He sees the hat.*]
The Emperor's—! Small *and* great!
[*He goes toward the window.*]
Oh, but the Countess watches in the park,
And if the signal's here I am to signal:
[*He takes out his handkerchief.*]
No! This won't do. A white flag makes her ill.
[*A servant enters with a reading-lamp, which he carries toward the* DUKE'S *room.*]

THE SERVANT.

The Duke of Reichstadt's reading-lamp.

FLAMBEAU.

[*Leaping upon him and seizing the lamp.*]
You dolt!
It's leaking! It must have fresh air!
[*He takes it out on the balcony.*]
You wave it three times so: arrange the wick;
[*He does as he says and gives the lamp back to the* SERVANT.]
That's it. See that?

THE SERVANT.

Oh, aren't you clever?
[*He carries the lamp into the* DUKE'S *room.*]

FLAMBEAU.

Rather!
To-morrow—flight!
[SEDLNIZKY *enters.*]

SEDLNIZKY.

The Duke?

FLAMBEAU.

[*Pointing to the room.*]

In there.

SEDLNIZKY.

Watch here.

FLAMBEAU.

I'm watching.

SEDLNIZKY.

Lock!

[*He goes out.*]

FLAMBEAU.

[*Locking the door after him.*]

Locked!

SEDLNIZKY.

[*Without.*]

Take the key out.

FLAMBEAU.

Out.

SEDLNIZKY.

None but the Emperor has the key. Be careful—
Watch.

FLAMBEAU.

As I always do.

[*He bends over the key-holes and arranges them carefully.*]

And for the night
I'll close the eyelids of the key-holes softly.

SEDLNIZKY'S VOICE.

Good-night, you Piedmontese.

FLAMBEAU.

Good-night, my Lord.

SEDLNIZKY'S VOICE.

Remember! you're on duty.

FLAMBEAU.

I'm on duty.

SEDLNIZKY'S VOICE.

Well, that's all right. Good-night.

FLAMBEAU.

Good-night!

[*He throws off his livery coat. Puts on the busby, which is standing on the console, and shoulders the musket. He is now in the full accoutrement of a Grenadier of the Guards.*]

And thus,
Suddenly upright, thin, unliveried,
Locked in till dawn, and safe against surprise,
Glowering with grizzled brows beneath his busby,
Straight in his ancient uniform, his gun
Firm in his arm, his hand on his right nipple,
The fixed and regulation attitude,
Standing thus every night before your threshold,
Giving himself a password full of pride,
Pleased with a deed that's grave, and yet a jest,
A Grenadier at Schönbrunn stands on guard
About the son as once about the Father.
'Tis the last time! You'll never hear of it.
'Tis for myself. A private luxury.
I must be mad to do a thing like this
For no one's eye, but just to say "By Jove,
That's rather good!" At Schönbrunn! In their teeth!
But I'm delighted!—I'm content!

[*He hears the noise of a key in the door.*]

I'm damned!

[*The door opens gently.*]

Who can have got the key?

[*He retires into the shadow by the* DUKE'S *door.*]

[METTERNICH *enters, carrying a large candelabrum.*]

METTERNICH.

No, no! This scene
Must never be repeated.

FLAMBEAU.

Nepomuk!

METTERNICH.

Yes, I will speak to-night. We are alone.
[*As he puts down the candelabrum he sees the hat.*]
What's this? I never knew he had one like—
Ah! the Archduchess must have sent him this;
So there thou art, thou legendary hat!
'Tis many years—Good day!—What sayst thou? What?
No, from thy little sable pyramid
Twelve years of splendor gaze on me in vain.
I do not fear thee now.
The leathern tag
With which he constantly could take thee off,
And so win cheers yet leave thy shape unharmed.
With thee he fanned himself after each victory;
Thou couldst not fall from his unheeding fingers,
But straight a king would stoop to pick thee up.
To-day, my friend, thou art a reach-me-down,
And if I tossed thee through the casement yonder
Where wouldst thou end thy days?

FLAMBEAU.

[*To himself.*] In a museum!

METTERNICH.

The famous little hat—how very ugly!
They called it little—is it really little?
No; it is big; enormous; it's the hat
A little man puts on to increase his inches.
For 'twas a hatter set the legend going:
The real Napoleon, after all, was Poupart.
Ah, never think my hatred of thee slumbers!
'Twas for thy shape's sake first I hated thee,

Thou vampire-bat of bloody battle-fields,
Hat that seemed fashioned out of raven's wings.
I hated thee for pitilessly soaring
Above the fields which witnessed our defeats,
Half-circle, seeming on the ruddy sky
The orb half-risen of some sable sun!
And for thy crown wherein the devil lurks,
Thou juggler's hat, laid with a sudden hand
Upon a throne, an army, or a nation—
When thou wert lifted all had disappeared.
I hated thee for the salutes I gave thee,
For thy simplicity—mere affectation—
Thy insolent joy, thou piece of common beaver
Amid the glittering diadems of gold;
For staying firmly on his haughty head
When I sought flattering epithets to please thee.
Conqueror, new, acclaimed, I hated thee!
I hate thee now, old, conquered and betrayed!
I hate thee for thy haughty shadow, cast
Forever on the wall of history;
I hate thee for thy Jacobin cockade,
Staring upon me like a bloodshot eye;
For all the murmurs sounding in thy shell,
That huge black shell the waves have left behind
Wherein the shuddering listener may hear
The rumor of a nation on the march.
I hate thee for the pride of France, whose bounds
Thou hast enlarged until she scorns the world;
For Béranger I hate thee, and Raffet,
For all the songs and all the pasquinades,
And for the halo of Saint Helena.
I hate thee, hate thee. I shall not be happy
Until thy clumsy triangle of cloth,
Despoiled of its traditions, is again
What it should ne'er have ceased to be in France—
The headgear of a village constable.

I hate—but suddenly—how strange!—the present
Sometimes with impish glee will ape the past!—
Seeing thy well-known shape before me thus
Carries my mind back to a distant day,
For it was here he always put thee down
When twenty years ago he sojourned here.
This room was then the ante-chamber; here,
Waiting till graciously he showed himself,
Dukes, Princes, Magyars, huddling in a corner,
Fixed from afar their humbled eyes upon thee,
Like lions, dreading with a helpless fury
The tamer's hat forgotten in the cage.
'Twas thus he placed thee, and here lay, as now,
Weapons and papers. One might say 'twas he
Had tossed thee carelessly upon the map,
That this were still his home, this Bonaparte!
And that by turning, on the threshold—there—
I should behold the Grenadier on—

[*He starts on seeing* FLAMBEAU *standing rigid before the* DUKE'S *door; he rubs his eyes.*]

Ha!
No! no! I'm feverish; my *tête-à-tête*
With the old hat plays havoc with my nerves!

[*He looks and draws near.* FLAMBEAU *does not move.*]

Or have the moonbeams conjured up a spectre?
What is it, then? Let's see—let's see—let's see!

[*He strides furiously toward* FLAMBEAU.]

Who are you, fellow?

FLAMBEAU.

[*Presenting his bayonet.*]

Who goes there?

METTERNICH.

[*Recoiling.*]

The devil!

FLAMBEAU.

[*Coldly.*]
Pass, devil.

METTERNICH.

[*With a forced laugh, coming toward him again.*]
Yes,—a very clever jest,
But—

FLAMBEAU.

[*Presenting his bayonet again.*]
Who goes there?

METTERNICH.

[*Recoiling.*]
But—

FLAMBEAU.

Move and you are dead.

METTERNICH.

But—I—

FLAMBEAU.

Quiet!

METTERNICH.

Let me pass!

FLAMBEAU.

The Emperor sleeps!

METTERNICH.

What!

FLAMBEAU.

Silence!

METTERNICH.

I'm the Austrian Chancellor!
I am all-powerful! I'm—

FLAMBEAU.

Shut your mouth!

METTERNICH.

I want to see the Duke of Reichstadt!

FLAMBEAU.

Out!

METTERNICH.

How—out?

FLAMBEAU.

What's Reichstadt? Never heard of Reichstadt!
Auerstadt, Elchingen, they're dukes I know.
Reichstadt's no duke. There's been no victory there.

METTERNICH.

But, we're at Schönbrunn!

FLAMBEAU.

I should rather think so!
Thanks to our new success we're quartered here;
And here we're getting ready at our leisure
To give the world another drubbing! See?

METTERNICH.

What's that you say? A new success?

FLAMBEAU.

Colossal!

METTERNICH.

This is July the ninth in Eighteen—

FLAMBEAU.

Nine!

METTERNICH.

Can I be mad?

FLAMBEAU.

Who are you? Where d'you spring from?
Why aren't you snug in bed? It's very fishy—

METTERNICH.

I—

FLAMBEAU.

Who let this braggart pass? The Mameluke?

METTERNICH.

The Mameluke?

FLAMBEAU.

All's going to the dogs!

METTERNICH.

But—

FLAMBEAU.

You here in the ante-room at night!

METTERNICH.

But I—

FLAMBEAU.

You calmly cross the Rosa chamber
Unchallenged by the sentinel on guard!

METTERNICH.

What?

FLAMBEAU.

When you ventured through the small rotunda,
Was there no yatagan to shave your cheek?
Were there no sergeants in the white saloon
Brewing their punch upon the golden stove?
No bristling veterans in the china-room?
And in the galleries? The Grenadiers
Saw you come strolling as a matter-of-course?
A man may cross the oval cabinet
And not be turned to mince-meat by Duroc?

METTERNICH.

The Marshal—?

FLAMBEAU.

Is the bulldog turned to lapdog?

METTERNICH.

I come here—

FLAMBEAU.

So the palace is an inn?
And when you'd managed all the sentinels,
Where were the rest? The porter? Gone to bed?

The valet? Absent? And the secretary?
Where was he hidden? In his own portfolio?

METTERNICH.

But I—

FLAMBEAU.

Instead of being after you,
No doubt the Aide-de-Camp was after women!

METTERNICH.

But—

FLAMBEAU.

And the Moor was saying prayers to Allah?
At any rate it's lucky I was here.
What discipline! If he looks into this
I'll bet my head he'll let the beggars know!

METTERNICH.

I'm going—

FLAMBEAU.

Ah! don't stir! You'll wake him!
He's sleeping on his little bed of laurels.

METTERNICH.

[*Falling into an armchair.*]
Was never such a dream! 'Twill make an epic!
[*His hand touches the flame of one of the candles.*]
Well, but this candle—

FLAMBEAU.

Burns.

METTERNICH.

[*Feeling the point of* FLAMBEAU'S ***bayonet.***]
This weapon—

FLAMBEAU.

Stings!

METTERNICH.

Then I'm awake! I'm—

FLAMBEAU.
Hold your tongue!

METTERNICH.
And what of Waterloo?

FLAMBEAU.
Of water—what?
[*Listening.*]
The Emperor stirred.

METTERNICH.
The Emperor?

FLAMBEAU.
Oh, my stars!
Now you turn whiter than a bugler's horse!

METTERNICH.
It is the Duke of Reichstadt! I'm not scared!
It is the Duke! I'm sure of it!

FLAMBEAU.
The Emperor!
[*The* DUKE *enters, with the reading lamp in his hand.*]

METTERNICH.
Aha! 'Tis you! 'Tis you! It is your Highness!
Ah, but how glad I am!

THE DUKE.
[*Puzzled.*]
Why are you glad?

METTERNICH.
The joke was played so well, I really thought
Another might come out!

FLAMBEAU.
[*As if waking from a dream.*]
Faith, so did I!

THE DUKE.

[*To* FLAMBEAU.]
What's this?

FLAMBEAU.

My little joke.

METTERNICH.

[*Ringing.*]

Help!

THE DUKE.

Fly!

FLAMBEAU.

The window!

THE DUKE.

The sentinel will shoot you!

FLAMBEAU.

If he can.

THE DUKE.

Your livery!

METTERNICH.

[*Putting his foot on it.*]

No!

FLAMBEAU.

Bah!

[*Aside to the* DUKE, *while* METTERNICH *rings again.*]

I will seek my cavern.

THE DUKE.

But I—

FLAMBEAU.

The ball to-morrow!

THE DUKE.

Are you mad?

FLAMBEAU.

You'll find me.

THE DUKE.

Quiet!

[FLAMBEAU *goes out by the window.*]

METTERNICH.

If he'd only break
His neck—He's singing!

THE DUKE.

[*On the balcony.*]

Hush!

FLAMBEAU'S VOICE.

My little joke!

[*A shot is heard.*]

THE DUKE.

Missed!

METTERNICH.

With what ease he finds his way about.

THE DUKE.

He knows it; he has been here once before.

METTERNICH.

[*To the* LACKEYS *who show themselves at the door.*]
Too late. Begone. I do not need your help.

[*The* LACKEYS *disappear.*]

THE DUKE.

And not a word of this to the police!

METTERNICH.

I never raise a laugh against myself.
What's the importance of a veteran's joke?
You're not Napoleon?

THE DUKE.

Who has settled that?

METTERNICH.

You have his hat, perhaps, but not his head!

THE DUKE.

Ah, yes, an epigram to damp my ardor.
'Tis not the pin-prick this time, 'tis the lash
That drives me headlong toward the wildest dreams.
I've not the head, you say? How do you know?

METTERNICH.

[*Takes the candelabrum in his hand and leads the* DUKE *to the cheval glass.*]
How do I know? Just glance into this mirror.
Look at the sullen sadness of your face,
The grim betrayal of your fair complexion,
This crushing golden hair—I bid you look!

THE DUKE.

[*Struggling to get out of his grasp.*]
No!

METTERNICH.

You're environed with a fatal mist!

THE DUKE.

No!

METTERNICH.

Though you know it not, 'tis Germany,
'Tis Spain, for ages dormant in your blood,
Make you so haughty, sorrowful, and charming.

THE DUKE.

No! no!

METTERNICH.

Bethink you of your self-distrust!
You—reign? Come, come! You would be pale and wan;
One of those timid, introspective kings
Who are imprisoned lest they abdicate.

THE DUKE.

No, no!

METTERNICH.

Not yours the energetic brow!
Yours is the brow of languor and of yearning.

THE DUKE.

[*Shaking, passes his left hand across his brow.*]
My—brow?

METTERNICH.

And drearily your Highness passes
Over an Austrian brow a Spanish hand!

THE DUKE.

My—hand?

METTERNICH.

Observe the frail and tapering fingers
Seen fair and jewelled in long lines of portraits!

THE DUKE.

No!

METTERNICH.

And those eyes through which your ancestors
Look forth!

THE DUKE.

The eyes—?

METTERNICH.

Ay! note them well! The eyes
Wherein how many eyes we've seen before
Dream of the fagot, weep for perished squadrons!
Dare you, whose conscience is so sensitive,
Ascend the throne of France with eyes like those?

THE DUKE.

Ah! but my Father!—

METTERNICH.

Naught of him is in you!
Search! Search again! Come closer to the light!
He stole our ancient blood to mix with his,

That his might grow more ancient. But he stole
Only the racial melancholy, and
The feebleness, and—

THE DUKE.
I beseech you!

METTERNICH.
Look!
Look in the mirror! You turn pale?

THE DUKE.
Enough!

METTERNICH.
And on your lips you recognize the pout
As of a doll, of Marie Antoinette,
Her whom your France beheaded; for your Father,
While stealing glory, stole mishap as well!
Nay! raise the chandelier!

[*He forces the chandelier into the* DUKE'S *right hand, and holds him by that wrist.*]

THE DUKE.
I am afraid.

METTERNICH.
You cannot gaze into this glass at night,
But all your race will gibber at your back!
Look—in the gloom—that shade is Mad Johanna,
And yonder Thing, that moves so deathly slow,
Is the pale sovereign in his crystal coffin.

THE DUKE.
No! 'Tis the radiant pallor of my Father!

METTERNICH.
Yonder, recoiling, Rudolph and his lions!

THE DUKE.
The clash of steeds and weapons! 'Tis the Consul!

METTERNICH.

Lo! in a noisome crypt one fashions gold.

THE DUKE.

He fashions glory on the sands of Egypt.

METTERNICH.

Aha! Here's Charles the Fifth, with hair cropped close,
Dying for having sought self-burial!

THE DUKE.

Help!
Father!

METTERNICH.

The Escurial! Grisly phantoms
And frowning walls!

THE DUKE.

Ah, hither! smiling visions:
Compiègne and Malmaison!

METTERNICH.

You see them! see them!

THE DUKE.

Roll, drums of Arcola, and drown his voice!

METTERNICH.

The mirror's teeming!

THE DUKE.

[*Twisting his wrist loose, but still holding the chandelier.*]
I will shatter it!

METTERNICH.

Others, and others yet, arrive!

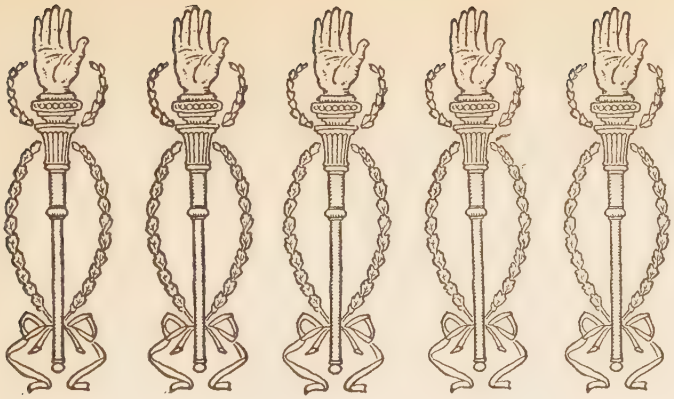
THE DUKE.

[*Hurling the chandelier into the mirror.*]
'Tis shattered!
Not one remains! Not one!

METTERNICH.
[*Pointing at the* DUKE *with a terrible gesture.*]
Yes!—One!

THE DUKE.
No, no!
It is not I! Not I!—My Father!—Help!

CURTAIN.



THE FOURTH ACT

The Park at Schönbrunn. Ruins of a Roman Arch in the centre, in front of which is a fountain. Entrances on the right and on the left. Towards the right, in front, is a pile of stones, parts of columns, a head of Neptune, a broken urn, the whole covered with ivy and shrubs. Orange-trees in boxes, bearing fruit and blossom, are dotted about, with lamps hanging in their foliage. At the rise of the curtain a gay throng of LORDS *and* LADIES *in dominos and other disguises are moving about the stage.*

FIRST MASK.

WHO is the clown?

SECOND MASK.

Don't know.

THIRD MASK.

The Cardinal?

FIRST MASK.

Don't know.

SECOND MASK.

The Punchinello?

THIRD MASK.

I don't know.

FOURTH MASK.

It's too delicious.

FIFTH MASK.

All incognito.

THE PUNCHINELLO.

[*To a lady in a domino.*]
Your ear—

THE DOMINO.

What for?

THE PUNCHINELLO.

Ah, hush! My secret!

FIRST MASK.

Watteau—

THE PUNCHINELLO.

[*To another* DOMINO.]
Your ear—

FIRST MASK.

Would have delighted in these figures—

THE DOMINO.

[*To the* PUNCHINELLO.]
What for?

THE PUNCHINELLO.

Ah, hush! My secret!

FIRST MASK.

And these ruins.

ANOTHER MASK.

All is uncertain, tremulous, and vague—
Our hearts, the music, moonbeams, and the water.

METTERNICH.

And so, dear Attaché of the French Embassy,
Here I've contrived half-darkness and half-silence,
And yonder in the music and the light
The ball—

THE ATTACHÉ.

It's really—

METTERNICH.

Rather good, I think.
This way—

THE ATTACHÉ.

You condescend to be my guide?

METTERNICH.

Dear friend, I'm prouder of this little ball,
Of having mingled all these courtly perfumes
With the wild odors of the midnight woods,
Than ever of the Congress of Verona.
That is the vestiary and the way out
So that in leaving you may find at once
Your Polish mantle or your overcoat.
Lastly, the theatre which I've contrived
On yonder bowling-green, near Cupid's fountain,
Where, in a set-piece made of natural foliage,
Some princely amateurs will play "Michel
And"—I don't know—some dainty little piece
By a French author: Eugène—what's-his-name?

THE ATTACHÉ.

And—supper?

METTERNICH.

Here.

THE ATTACHÉ.
What?

METTERNICH.
Every box will blossom
With snowy tablecloths and golden dishes.

THE ATTACHÉ.
The orange-trees?

METTERNICH.
My own idea. They'll bring
All they can find. Under each leafy ball
Two couples will be seated, starved and laughing.

THE ATTACHÉ.
Supper in short at separate orange-trees?
Splendid.

METTERNICH.
Why, yes.—And as for grave affairs—
[*To a* LACKEY.]
Tell them to play no more Slavonic dances—
[*To the* ATTACHÉ.]
I do not put them off. Not I. I leave
Ere supper-time to meet the Hospodars—
They are awaiting me—
[*To a* LACKEY.]
Those wreaths are skimpy.
My hobby's organizing balls like this;
And when the revelry is at its highest
Back to the everlasting Eastern Question!
I love to rule a people and a ball:
The Arbiter of Europe—

THE ATTACHÉ.
And its elegance!

GENTZ.
Arbiter Elegantiarum!

METTERNICH.

Ah,
You're talking Latin; you've been drinking?

GENTZ.

Rum.

METTERNICH.

Fanny has kept you very late at table;
Oh, this *liaison!* you're as good as lost.

GENTZ.

What? I and Fanny? Off.

METTERNICH.

What?

GENTZ.

Off.

METTERNICH.

[*Seeing the Prefect of Police.*]

Sedlnizky.

SEDLNIZKY.

One word.

GENTZ.

[*To* METTERNICH.]

It's off.

[*To a* DOMINO.]

'Twas wrong to bring you, Fanny.
If they discovered you! What an imprudence!
A public dancer!

FANNY.

Oh, I'll dance discreetly.

GENTZ.

They'll find you out. For heaven's sake be clumsy.

METTERNICH.

A plot?

SEDLNIZKY.

Yes; for the Duke!—and at this ball!

METTERNICH.

[*Lightly.*]
Here! you alarm me!

GENTZ.

Be an angel, Fanny,
And tell me why you wished to come.

FANNY.

Caprice.

METTERNICH.

I fear the Duke no more. I've killed his pride,
And he's in mourning for it. He'll not come.

SEDLNIZKY.

But there's a plot!

METTERNICH.

Bah!

SEDLNIZKY.

Women—

METTERNICH.

Featherbrains.

SEDLNIZKY.

No! Noble ladies.

METTERNICH.

Really?

SEDLNIZKY.

Poles and Greeks:
Princess Grazalcowitch.

METTERNICH.

Grazalcowitch!
That's terrible!
[*To a* LACKEY.]
Pray let me have a sandwich.

SEDLNIZKY.

You laugh?—Hush!—Here they come. They've fled
the light
And seek a nook to whisper in.
[*Enter several* DOMINOS.]

ONE OF THE DOMINOS.

My dear,
How sweet it is to run a risk for his sake.

SECOND DOMINO.

Let us conspire!

THIRD DOMINO.

His hair's such lovely auburn.

FOURTH DOMINO.

It's like a pretty little halo, dear,
Through which a regal crown is dimly seen.

FIFTH DOMINO.

He has a doubly-fascinating charm:—
A fair Napoleon! Hamlet dressed in white!

FIRST DOMINO.

Let us conspire!

SECOND DOMINO.

First, I suggest we order
A golden bee from Stieger in Vienna.

ANOTHER DOMINO.

Vienna! Why? That *would* be idiotic!
We'll have it made by Odiot in Paris.

FOURTH DOMINO.

I move we always wear with every dress
A very striking bunch of violets.

FIRST DOMINO.

That's it, Princess!

ANOTHER DOMINO.

And let us risk returning
To Empire fashions.

SECOND DOMINO.

For evening: not for day.

THIRD DOMINO.

Dear, don't forget the horrible short waists.

ALL.

And all the puffs!—and ruches!—Dearest!

METTERNICH.

Ladies—

ALL.

Good heavens!

METTERNICH.

Go on with your delicious plotting.
Conspire! conspire! Ha-ha!
[*He goes out, laughing heartily.*]

FIRST DOMINO.

And now
That thanks to idle chatter we've removed
Whatever doubts Sedlnizky had aroused,
We'll prove that after female Machiavellis
The Metternichest Metternich's a baby.

ALL.

Yes!

FIRST DOMINO.

Each remembers what she has to do?

ALL.

Yes!

FIRST DOMINO.

Mingle with the dances.

SEVERAL MASKS.

[*Pursuing another.*]

He's so funny!

A MASK.

It must be Sandor!

ANOTHER.

No! it's Fürstenberg!

ANOTHER.

And who's the bear, dancing to Schubert's waltz?

A MASK.

What's sad Elvira's dress? A star?

GENTZ.

A night-light.

A MASK.

Thecla, the hypocrite—?

GENTZ.

Disguised as Truth.

TIBURTIUS.

[*Entering with* THERESA.]

Not gone to Parma, sister?

THERESA.

No. To-morrow.

The Duchess put it off to see this ball.

[*Pointing to a Domino who passes at the back accompanied by a Mask.*]

She's yonder with Bombelles: the greenish cape.

TIBURTIUS.

I'm glad you're going, for *Noblesse oblige;*
I couldn't stand much more of those asides
Between the little Bonaparte and you.

THERESA.

What?

TIBURTIUS.

'Tis our glory that our ancestors
Have not been over-prudish with our kings;
It is no fall to pick up handkerchiefs
When on the handkerchief a lily's broidered.
But honor never will accept a rag
Which bears the Bonapartist weed and hornet.
Woe to the Ogre's brat—!

THERESA.

What!

TIBURTIUS.

If he touched you!

THERESA.

You use expressions, brother—

TIBURTIUS.

They are warnings.

A BEAR.

[*Passing with a Chinese woman.*]
How do you know I am a diplomat?

THE CHINESE WOMAN.

Why, by the skilful way you hide your claws.

THE ATTACHÉ.

[*Pursuing* FANNY.]
Is there no way of knowing who you are?
Now, are you English?

FANNY.

Ja.

THE ATTACHÉ.

Or German?

FANNY.

Oui.

PROKESCH.

[*Entering with the* DUKE.]
My Lord, is not the ball beyond compare?

THE PUNCHINELLO.
[*To a* DOMINO.]
Your ear—!

THE DOMINO.
What for?

THE PUNCHINELLO.
My secret! Hush!
[*To another* DOMINO.]
Your ear!

PROKESCH.
This corner's charming, given up to shadows—

THE CHINESE WOMAN.
[*To the* BEAR.]
What are you carrying on your arm?

THE BEAR.
My nose-ring.

PROKESCH.
Charming, those scattered blocks, the broken god,
The ivied urn, and, in its frame of stone,
Yonder the water. It is like—

THE DUKE.
A mirror!

PROKESCH.
What had Prince Metternich to say last night?
[*Seeing the* DUKE *unmask.*]
You take your mask off?

THE DUKE.
And, alas, that's all.
A stone.

PROKESCH.
What for?

THE DUKE.
To cast into the pond—
All's vanished. Only circles on the water.

PROKESCH.

You are depressed, and yet to-night the plot
Must come to a head if I may trust the symptoms.
These lines were slipped into my hand this morning:
[*He takes a note out of his pocket.*]
"Ask him to be there early, and to wear
His uniform beneath a violet cloak."

THE DUKE.

Oh, 'twere too criminal—

PROKESCH.

The note—

THE DUKE.

The note
Is from a woman anxious not to miss me.
I've taken her advice, for I am here
Only for love's adventure.

PROKESCH.

No!

THE DUKE.

That's all.

PROKESCH.

But then—the plot?

THE DUKE.

Oh, 'twere too criminal,
Dear country, made of sunshine and of laughter,
To raise upon the high seat of thy glory
A child of night, misfortune, and the Escurial!
What if, when I were seated there, the past,
Plunging its yellow hands into my soul,
With hideous claws unearthed some ancestor:
Some Rudolph or some Philip? Ah! I dread
Lest at the humming of Imperial bees
The monster sleeping in me should awake.

PROKESCH.

[*Laughing.*]
Prince, this is madness!

THE DUKE.

[*With a shudder and a look which makes* PROKESCH *start back with horror.*]
Madness! Do you think so?

PROKESCH.

Good heavens!

THE DUKE.

Buried in their fastnesses,
Cowering in Bohemia or Castile,
Each had his madness. What is mine to be?
Come! We'll decide! You see I am resigned.
'Tis time to choose—and I have choice enough:
My thoughtful forebears left a catalogue!
Shall I be melomaniac or astrologer?
Catch birds, bend o'er alembics, mumble prayers?

PROKESCH.

Too well I see what Metternich has done!

THE DUKE.

Grandfather, shall I carry on your great
Herbarium, where the hellebore is missing?
Or shall I, living, play at being dead?
Which ancestor will godfather my madness?
The living-dead, the alchemist, or bigot?
You see, they took their madness rather sadly,
But mingled perfumes make a novel scent;
My brain, mixed of these gloomy brains, may start
Some pretty little madness of its own.
Come! What shall my peculiar madness be?
By heavens! My instincts, conquered till to-day,
Make it quite simple: I'll be mad with love!
I'll love and love, and crush, with bitter hate,
This Austrian lip under a passionate kiss!

PROKESCH.

Prince!

THE DUKE.

As Don Juan I am all my race!
Snarer of hearts, astrologer of eyes;
I'll have herbaria full of blighted names,
And the philosopher's stone I seek is love!

PROKESCH.

My Lord!

THE DUKE.

Why, if you think of it, dear friend,
Napoleon's son, Don Juan, is strict logic.
The soul's the same: ever dissatisfied;
The same unceasing lust of victory.
Oh splendid blood another has corrupted,
Who, striving to be Cæsar, was not able;
Thy energy is not all dead within me.
A misbegotten Cæsar is Don Juan!
Yes, 'tis another way of conquering;
Thus I shall know that fever of the heart
Which Byron tells us kills whom it devours;
And 'tis a way of being still my father.
Napoleon or Don Juan!—They're decision,
The magic will, and the seductive grace.
When to retake a great unfaithful land,
Calm and alone, sure of himself and her,
The adventurer landed in the Gulf of Juan,
He felt Don Juan's thrill; and when Don Juan
Pricked a new conquest in his list of loves,
Did he not feel the pride of Bonaparte?
And, after all, who knows whether 'tis greater
To conquer worlds, or be a moment loved?
So be it! 'Tis well the legend closes thus,
And that *this* conqueror is the other's son.
I'm the fair shadow of the dusky hero,

And, as he conquered nations, one by one,
So will I conquer women, one by one.
Moonbeams shall be my sun of Austerlitz!

PROKESCH.

Ah, silence! for your irony's too bitter.

THE DUKE.

Oh, yes; I know. I hear the spectres crying—
Blue-coated spectres torn along the whirlwind—
"Well? What about the Imperial tale of triumph?
Our toil? our wounds? our glory?—What about
The snow, the blood, the history, the dead
We left on all the fields of victory?
What will you do with these?"—I'll charm the ladies!
It's fine, among the people in the Prater,
To ride a horse that cost three thousand florins,
Which one can christen Jena. Austerlitz
Is a sure bait to catch a fair coquette.

PROKESCH.

You'll never have the heart to use it thus.

THE DUKE.

Why, yes; why, yes, my friend. And in my scarf—
For 'tis a thing looks well upon a lover—
I'll wear a dainty eaglet for a pin.
There's music!—Now, O Cæsar's son, you're but
Mozart's Don Juan! Nay, not even Mozart's!
Strauss's! I'll waltz; for now I must become
Charming and useless: Austrian fancy-goods!
My aunt?—Why—!

PROKESCH.

Oh, not that!

THE DUKE.

I want to see—

[PROKESCH *goes out.*]

THE DUKE.

How deep the linden's perfume is to-night.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Notice my salver. I'm so proud of it.

THE DUKE.

You represent?

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

The "Chocolate-girl," the famous
Picture in Dresden.

THE DUKE.

[*Affectedly.*] Cha'ming. But your chocolate
Must be a nuisance.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

No.

THE DUKE.

Do put it down.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Well, Franz? A little bit in love with life?

THE DUKE.

Glad to be nephew of a pretty aunt.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

And I am glad to have so big a nephew.

THE DUKE.

Too pretty.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

And too big.

THE DUKE.

For such a game.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

What game?

THE DUKE.

The game of tender intimacy.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

I fear your eyes to-night—!

THE DUKE.

But I love yours!

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Ah, now I see! As all the court is masked,
Even friendship wears the domino of love.

THE DUKE.

Oh friendship—auntie with a cousin's eyes—
Friendship and love are always much too near
'Twixt aunts and nephews, god-sons and god-mothers—
Oh! do but smell the fragrance of the lindens!—
'Twixt pretty chocolate-girls and officers,
And frontier incidents are bound to happen.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Our friendship's lost its bloom.

THE DUKE.

I dearly love
This sentiment one cannot understand,
Where all's confused and mingled—

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

No, let be.

[*She moves away.*]

THE DUKE.

Oh, if you put on airs of an Archduchess—!

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Farewell; you've pained me deeply, Franz.

[*She goes.*]

THE DUKE.

Ah, bah!
Into our friendship I let fall a drop,
And friendship turns to troubled love. I'll wait.

[*He sees* THERESA.]

Why! What is this? How comes it you are here?
So you're not hastening toward the skies of Parma?
And all this grass? What are you?

THERESA.

"Little Brooklet."

THE DUKE.

Ah, yes, I know. An exile on his rock,
My father had a brooklet for his friend
To drown the gaoler's voice, and that is why
At Schönbrunn, which is my Saint Helena,
My soul must not be left deprived of comfort.
Having the gaoler I've the brooklet too.

THERESA.

But you will never stoop to look at me.

THE DUKE.

Because I dreamed of flying from my rock;
But that's all over.

THERESA.

How?

THE DUKE.

All hope is gone.
I wake from dreams.

THERESA.

You suffer?

THE DUKE.

Little Brooklet
Must give her murmuring freshness.

THERESA.

Here it is.

THE DUKE.

What if I trouble its waters?

THERESA.

Trouble them.

THE DUKE.

Come to the little house among the trees—
My hunting lodge—to-night!

THERESA.

I am to come—!

THE DUKE.

Say neither yes nor no.—I'll wait—

THERESA.

Alas!

THE DUKE.

Think how unhappy I shall henceforth be!
I've lost all hope of playing a great part;
I can but weep; I need a heart to weep on.
Away!

A MASK.

[*Seeing a stout lady dressed as a shepherdess.*]
That shepherdess has eaten her flock!

THE BEAR.

If you'll but love me—

THE CHINESE WOMAN.

You will sell your skin?

A DOMINO.

[*Passing on* GENTZ'S *arm.*]
The Viscount's here as Doge in grand dalmatic.

GENTZ.

Then is the Baroness the Adriatic.

THE DUKE.

[*Who has scribbled a note; to a* LACKEY.]
This for my lackeys. I shall not come in.
I'm sleeping at the hunting-lodge. Make haste!
Let me have word they've read and understood.

THE LACKEY.

Nought else, my Lord?

THE DUKE.

To-morrow the bay mare.

FANNY ELSSLER.

His uniform beneath a—

THE DUKE.

[*Turning.*]

Violet cloak.

Prokesch! I said your note was from a woman!

FANNY.

[*Pointing to the* ATTACHÉ, *who has followed her.*]

Let me get rid of this importunate mask.
And I'll come back.

THE DUKE.

I'll wait. 'Tis fate. I yield.
I'll love, with stormy April in my heart.
I'll love—like these—like all!

BOMBELLES.

[*Who has come in with* MARIA LOUISA. *She sits on the stone bench.*]

Was he in love?

MARIA LOUISA.

What! must you still be harping on him?

BOMBELLES.

Yes.

THE DUKE.

My mother and Bombelles—!

BOMBELLES.

Speak!

MARIA LOUISA.

I don't know.
He was intimidated in my presence.
Even on his throne, beneath his golden laurels,
He felt his inequality of birth;

And then, to keep a countenance, he'd call me
His "Good Louisa." Yes! such shocking taste!
For I love sentiment. I am a woman.

BOMBELLES.

And queen of all!

MARIA LOUISA.

A little thing I said
When Saint Aulaire came to my room at Blois
With news of his disasters, made them furious.
I was in bed. My naked foot peeped out,
And, lying on the polished wood, as if
Thomire had carved it, seemed at once to turn
The Medicean bed into an Empire bed.
And seeing the Envoy furtively look down,
I smiled and said, "You're looking at my foot."
And so he was. In spite of all misfortunes,
Indeed the man was looking at my foot.
Was this coquettish? Well, what of it? Heavens!
Where was the crime if I remained a woman?
For, after all, amid the crash of France,
The beauty of my foot had *some* importance!

THE DUKE.

Would I could fly! but I am glued to the spot!

BOMBELLES.

What's the grey pebble in your bracelet?

MARIA LOUISA.

That?
Ah, I can never see it without tears.
That is a fragment—

BOMBELLES.

Of the Pyramids?

MARIA LOUISA.

What nonsense! 'Tis a fragment of the tomb
Where Juliet sleeps beside her Romeo—
I had this souvenir—

BOMBELLES.

For pity's sake
Don't mention Neipperg!

MARIA LOUISA.

If he irritates you,
Why speak about the first?

BOMBELLES.

That's different,
But did you love him?

MARIA LOUISA.

Whom?

BOMBELLES.

The—first.

MARIA LOUISA.

Again?

BOMBELLES.

So great a man! You must—

MARIA LOUISA.

Oh, as for that,
No man is ever loved because he's great.
Let's talk of him no more: let's talk of us.
Will you like Parma?

BOMBELLES.

Tell me, was he jealous?

MARIA LOUISA.

So much so that he drove away Leroy,
Because the poor man-milliner cried out
With admiration when he saw my shoulders,
While trying on a peplum.

BOMBELLES.

Then Napoleon—

MARIA LOUISA.

Oh, hush!

BOMBELLES.

Would not have liked to hear me say
How fair they are? Would not have liked—

MARIA LOUISA.

Bombelles!

BOMBELLES.

To hear me whisper to your Majesty—

THE DUKE.

Father, forgive me for the things I hear!

BOMBELLES.

That you are like our own Arlesian maids
But, ah! how much more beautiful!—

MARIA LOUISA.

Oh, Charles!

BOMBELLES.

Would not have liked to see me bend and press—

THE DUKE.

[*Breaking in upon them.*]
Not that! I will not have it! I forbid you!—
Thank God, I'm saved!

MARIA LOUISA.

Franz!

THE DUKE.

For this cry, this movement
Were not my own. Within me still remains
A reverence for my mother and her freedom!
'Twas he—'Twas he by whom my soul's possessed,
Who sprang upon you with this tragic force!
Thank God! I'm saved! The Corsican leapt out!

BOMBELLES.

Sir—!

THE DUKE.

Nothing, sir!
[*To* MARIA LOUISA.]
My humble duty, Madam!

Return to Sala, spend your days in peace.
The castle has two wings, as I am told:
One is a theatre and one a chapel.
Thus dwelling in the middle, you shall feel
Evenly balanced 'twixt the world and God.
My humble duty!

MARIA LOUISA.

Franz!

THE DUKE.

Why, truly, Madam,
It's your prerogative to be mere woman.
Go, be a woman in the Sala palace;
But tell yourself, Ah! tell yourself—and this
Shall be your sad atonement for his glory,
Widow who cast aside her widow's weeds!—
Tell yourself this: Men only gaze upon you
For the immortal fame he robed you in,
And only whisper praises of your beauty
Because of old he conquered all the world!

MARIA LOUISA.

I'll hear no more! Bombelles, let us begone!

THE DUKE.

Return to Sala. I am saved. Thank God!

MARIA LOUISA.

Farewell!

THE DUKE.

O hands, cold hands within the tomb,
Sad hands because the Imperial ring slipped from you,
Hands that have held her brow who years ago
Shed bitter tears that I was not her son,
Hands laid in blessing on my orphaned soul,
Weeping I kiss you, hands of Josephine!

MARIA LOUISA.

The Creole! Do you think at Malmaison—?

THE DUKE.

Silence! If it be true, all the more reason!
All the more reason why I should be faithful!

[MARIA LOUISA *and* BOMBELLES *go out.*]

[*Enter* METTERNICH *and* SEDLNIZKY.]

METTERNICH.

[*To* SEDLNIZKY.]
Yes, yes; I humbled that rebellious child!

[*He sees the* DUKE.]

You here? And in this uniform? What means?

THE DUKE.

Were we not asked to come here in—disguise?

SEDLNIZKY.

The pride your Excellency broke last night
Even in its fragments keeps its insolence.

[*To the* DUKE.]

What are you dreaming of, far from the ball,
My little Colonel?

THE DUKE.

Of my Little Corporal!

METTERNICH.

[*On the point of breaking out.*]
Oh, I—

[*Mastering himself.*]

But I must go to my despatches.
'Tis all to do again!

[*He and* SEDLNIZKY *go out.*]

[*Enter* FANNY ELSSLER.]

FANNY.

Prince!

THE DUKE.

No! that woman!
I will not—!

FANNY.

[*Unmasking.*]
Fly?

THE DUKE.

[*Recognizing her.*]
Fanny!

FANNY.

The plot!

THE DUKE.

What's that?

FANNY.

I'm in it. Let me tell you—

THE DUKE.

Ah!

FANNY.

Look innocent.
Sit down. Pretend you're very much in love.
You on the rock. I on the Neptune's head.
[*Speaking to the stone head.*]
May I sit down, good Neptune?

THE STONE HEAD.

If you like.
Only I warn you, it's all over ants.

FANNY.

Lord! Neptune's talking!

THE DUKE.

[*Understanding and remembering.*]
Ah! beneath the ivy!

FLAMBEAU.

The entrance to my cavern through an ant-heap.

THE DUKE.

You! Flambeau!

FLAMBEAU

In the cave of Rob—

MASKS.

Ho hi!

FANNY.

Hush! Masks!

MASKS.

Oh, very funny!

[*They pass out.*]

FLAMBEAU.

—inson Crusoe!

THE DUKE.

What! Since last night?

FLAMBEAU.

Oh, yes; I smoke my pipe—

THE DUKE.

There in the hole?

FLAMBEAU.

You copied from the beggar
Who first invented bearskins, so they say,
And had a funny Mameluke called Friday.

THE DUKE.

I cannot find the spot.

FLAMBEAU.

It's on the right.
Here, where I blow a cloud out of my pipe.

FANNY.

The small Vesuvius!

THE DUKE.

You must be—

FLAMBEAU.

Uncomfortable.
But then—I said you'd find me at the ball.

FANNY.

If they should catch us talking to a smoke!

FLAMBEAU.

Ouch!

THE DUKE.

What's the matter?

FLAMBEAU.

An attack of ants.
Since yesterday we've had the bloodiest battles.

FANNY.

But—

FLAMBEAU.

They outnumber me, but I've tobacco.
I blow a blast—

THE DUKE.

You bring your heavy guns?

FLAMBEAU.

May I lift up my rock a bit?

THE DUKE.

Yes.

FLAMBEAU.

[*Seeing* MASKS *approaching.*]

Nuns!

THE DUKE AND FANNY.

Hush!

FLAMBEAU.

Now I look as if I took the air
On the tomb's balcony.

THE DUKE.

And in the moon
Beside the urn, uplifting thus the stone,
You're rising to the ghostly night-review.

FLAMBEAU.

I'm very hungry.

FANNY.

Hush!

THE DUKE.

[*To some* SERVANTS *who enter bearing dishes.*]

What's that you carry?

[*The* SERVANTS *stop. The* DUKE *takes a little of everything.*]

Thank you.

FANNY.

[*Stopping them.*]

One moment.

[*She takes what is left. The* SERVANTS *pass out.*]

THE DUKE.

[*Giving* FLAMBEAU *the cakes.*]

Take them.

FLAMBEAU.

Enough.

My strength returns.

[*To* FANNY.]

Explain. We've little time.

FANNY.

[*Nervously.*]

Well, then—the Countess—she is here—the Countess—
That's how my nerve goes when I have to dance—
She wears beneath a russet cloak your uniform,
With which the Eaglet's turned into a sea-mew.
She was already like you in the face,
But since she's dyed her sable tresses fair
Your glass could not distinguish you from her.
So, while they play their "Michel and Christine,"
You'll change your mantle quickly with your cousin—

THE DUKE.

Put on a mask—!

FANNY.

And disappear like magic!

THE DUKE.

My double takes my place—

FANNY.

And openly

Leaves the assembly—

THE DUKE.

Sets me free of spies—

FANNY.

Goes home to Schönbrunn—

THE DUKE.

Locks the door with care—

FANNY.

Forgets to wake—

THE DUKE.

Till I am miles away.

Only—

FANNY.

What "only" is there?

THE DUKE.

Quite a big one.

Suppose the false Duke's spoken to?

FANNY.

Impossible.

It's all stage-managed like a ballet. Ladies
Will flutter round him, keep intruders off,
And as a ball from racket flies to racket
He'll pass from hand to hand until he's safe.

MASKS.

[*Running across at the back.*]

Who is the wolf? Wow! Wow! Who is the bear?
There! There!

FANNY.

You leave the Gardens—

THE DUKE.

By the Hietzing gate—

FANNY.

No.

THE DUKE.

Where, then?

FANNY.

Listeners. I fan myself.
Glance at your humble servant's pretty fan.

THE DUKE.

What for?

FANNY.

I've drawn a sketch-map of the park.
Observe the road; it's red; it makes a bend;
Do you see? The little squares of white are statues;
The little dots of apple-green are trees;
Thus you elude the evil-minded spies;
Turn to the left; pass by the pheasantry—

THE DUKE.

What are the scratches?

FANNY.

Where the hill goes up.
Then you go down again; pass by the Triton
And come out Emperor at this little gate.
All clearly understood?—I shut my fan.

THE DUKE.

Emperor!

FLAMBEAU.

That's right. Get out your robes and crown!
Don't go so fast!

THE DUKE.

What's at the gate?

FANNY.

A cab.

THE DUKE.

A cab?

FANNY.

With spanking horses; have no fear.

THE DUKE.

Where does it take me?

FANNY.

To the rendezvous.

THE DUKE.

Where's that?

FANNY.

Out of your way, but so the Countess
Would have it:—Wagram.

THE DUKE.

What a Bonaparte!

FANNY.

Well? Are you pleased?

THE DUKE.

Dear little Tanagra,
I'll recompense your zeal—

FANNY.

Ungrateful monster!

THE DUKE.

And Prokesch?

FANNY.

He'll be waiting for you there.

THE DUKE.

The only man whose eye we had to fear—
Prince Metternich—has left. All will go well.

FLAMBEAU.

Metternich gone! You never said a word!

THE DUKE.

Well—

FLAMBEAU.

And you let me catch my death, beneath
This beastly urn—!

FANNY.

Masks coming!

MASKS.

Sandor! Zichy!
It's Thalberg!—Never!—Thalberg is a Turk!
It's Cocica!—Not he!—He's fled!—Oh! catch him!

FLAMBEAU.

Gone?

THE DUKE AND FANNY.

Gone.

FLAMBEAU.

[*Emerging, dressed as in the previous act.*]
Then—

THE DUKE AND FANNY.

Are you mad?

FLAMBEAU.

We'll shut the trap.

THE DUKE.

But if they see you—!

FANNY.

Vanish! This is frightful!

THE DUKE.

What will they say?

FLAMBEAU.

I'll tell you what they'll say—

MASKS.

[*Seeing* FLAMBEAU.]
And this one! Oh! a veteran of the Empire!

FLAMBEAU.

[*To the* DUKE.]
Well, there you are, you see! That's what they'll say.

MASKS.

Capital! Capital!

FLAMBEAU.

I take my ease.

A MASK.

[*To another.*]
Come and admire the veteran!

THE OTHER.

First rate!

THIRD MASK.

Look at his earrings!

FOURTH MASK.

And his bushy eyebrows!

FLAMBEAU.

But how shall I get out without a cloak?

FANNY.

Here's Gentz's ticket: such a handsome mantle.

A MASK.

Hail, Veteran!

FLAMBEAU.

The honor's mine.

[*The* USHER *enters, followed by* SERVANTS *who push on orange-trees, the boxes laid as tables.*]

THE USHER.

Make room!

THE LACKEY.

[*Who took the* DUKE'S *note.*]
They understand, my Lord. The hunting-lodge.

FANNY.

What's that?

THE DUKE.

I had forgotten. I gave orders—
I was to spend the night there. Warn the Countess.
Run! Run and say 'tis thither she must go!

[FANNY *goes out quickly.*]

The Duke de Reichstadt

Francesco Duca di Reichstadt

A Mask.

[*To* Flambeau.]
Well, Sergeant? So you served— . . .

Flambeau.

The gr-reat—

Several Masks.

[*Laughing.*] The gr-reat!

Flambeau.

They didn't laugh when we were quartered on 'em!

Exclamations.

A picture by Raffet!—Charlet!—Vernet!

Several Masks.

How worn his coat is!—And how singed!—And dusty!—
Who's your costumier?—Tell us!

Flambeau.

They are ladies:—
The ancient firm of War and Victory Sisters.

A Mask.

That's good.

Flambeau.

It's not the firm you patronize.

First Mask.

I'll swear it's Zichy.
[*Offering his hand.*]
Count, your hand.

Flambeau.

[*Blowing a puff of smoke in his face.*]
Get out.

First Mask.

[*Going out, to the others.*]
He's masked his language as he's masked his face.

Flambeau.

[*Singing.*]
When we marched to Krasnoï,
Cold and hungry, too, were we!

A MASK.

He's really excellent. In Russia, old 'un,
'Twas pretty cold?

FLAMBEAU.

Yes; till we gave 'em hell.

[*Sings.*]

By Jingo, but it keeps you warm
Merely to see his uniform!

A MASK.

His uniform wants patching now, though; what?

FLAMBEAU.

So did your breeches when he'd kicked you; what?

SEVERAL.

Ha! Very funny!

FIRST MASK.

Natural.

SECOND MASK.

Exact.

THIRD MASK.

But doubtful taste.

THE USHER.

The comedy's begun!

FANNY.

[*To the* DUKE.]
I'm back again. The Countess understands.

FLAMBEAU.

[*To* THERESA.]
Will you accept a veteran's arm?

THERESA.

No.

FLAMBEAU.

Why?

THERESA.

I'm leaving, sir. Apart from that, I'm French,
And see no humor in a parody
Of heroes whom by chance you conquered.

FLAMBEAU.

You—
Ah! I adore you!

[*She runs away. Just as she is disappearing the* DUKE *makes a movement toward her.*]

THE DUKE.

Ah!—the tryst.

THERESA.

The tryst—?

THE DUKE.

No—nothing.

[THERESA *passes on.*]

She must keep it. She must show
Whether she would have been sublimely weak,
And given herself unthinking—without hope—
Only because she saw me sad to-night.

FANNY.

[*To* FLAMBEAU.]
Watch where they've got to in the comedy.

[FLAMBEAU *goes to the entrance of the theatre.*]

[*To the* DUKE.]
The time has come.

FLAMBEAU.

All eyes are running over
With grief for Stanislas, the mournful Pole.

FANNY.

Here is the Countess, Duke.

THE DUKE.

My very image!
I'm coming toward myself as in a glass.

[*The* COUNTESS CAMERATA *enters, dressed exactly like the* DUKE, *with the exception of her cloak, which is brown.*]

THE COUNTESS.

Well met, Napoleon!

THE DUKE.

And Napoleone!

THE COUNTESS.

I'm very calm—and you?

THE DUKE.

I see the risks
You'll run for my sake.

THE COUNTESS.

Not for your sake.

THE DUKE.

Ah?

THE COUNTESS.

No! For the name, the glory, and our blood!

THE DUKE.

You bravely clash your arms, fair Amazon!

THE COUNTESS.

The deed were nothing, were it done for love.

THE DUKE.

Speaking of love, if, when you've taken my place
In yonder hunting-lodge, by any chance
A woman came—

THE COUNTESS.

Ah! I felt sure of it!

THE DUKE.

Tell her about my flight—and swear to me—

FLAMBEAU.

[*At the entrance to the theatre, describing the play.*]
The soldier holds his tongue!

THE COUNTESS.

Good.

FLAMBEAU.

Doesn't murmur.

THE DUKE.

Swear you will tell me later if she comes.

THE COUNTESS.

Thinking of hearts, when Empire is at hand!

THE DUKE.

It is because I mount a throne to-morrow
I lay such value on a heart to-night.
O God! to feel respect in every kiss,
Snares in avowals, in embraces dread,
And in fair eyes, more dazzled than in love,
See laurel-wreaths about me as on coins!
I was to pluck my last real love to-night!

FLAMBEAU.

[*As before.*]
He's telling them about his pocket-book.

THE DUKE.

I would she kept this white and spotless tryst,
She who has not yet studied to dissemble;
'Twere well she came, for nevermore, perchance,
Whatever later trysts I yet may keep,
Shall I be waiting with such eager love,
As at the tryst to-night I may not keep.

THE COUNTESS.

I find your Highness very deeply stirred.

THE DUKE.

Less than I shall be if you say "She came."

FLAMBEAU.

[*As before.*]
We must make haste, for with his eyes turned up,
He's singing something to his colonel.

THE COUNTESS.

Change!

FLAMBEAU.

Wait for the signal. Have no fear; I'm watching.
Attention! By the magic of my wand!

THE COUNTESS.

Think well! Perhaps you turn him into Cæsar!

FLAMBEAU.

That's why my wand is fashioned of a ramrod.
[*Noise of people leaving the theatre.*]
They're coming! Now!
[*The* DUKE *and the* COUNTESS *exchange cloaks.*]

MASKS AND DOMINOS.

[*Entering.*]
They've dressed the orange-trees!

ALL.

Oh!

FANNY.

[*To the* DUKE, *pointing to the* COUNTESS.]
There's our swarm of women buzzing round him.

LADIES.

[*Around the false* DUKE.]
Prince!—Duke—! My Lord—! Your Highness—!

GENTZ.

No one else
Has any chance to-night!

CRIES.

[*From the tables.*]
Sandor! Zichy! Mina!

THE DOMINO CALLED MINA.

How did you know me?

A MASK.

By your opal necklace.

ANOTHER MASK.

We'll gather oranges for our dessert.

A LADY.

[*To the false* DUKE.]
Duke—

MASKS.

Danube sterlets! Caviar from the Volga!
[*All are seated.*]

GENTZ.

[*Rising, glass in hand.*]
Ladies and gentlemen—

ALL.

Hear! Hear!

THE DUKE.

Now comes
The trying moment.

GENTZ.

I have filled this bumper
In honor—

THE DUKE.

She is going—

GENTZ.

Of our friend,
Who, having organized the feast, has left us
Amid the music, flowers, delicious ices,
To toil till dawn dictating his despatches.

FANNY.

How well she imitates your careless stride!

GENTZ.

To the Prince-chancellor, Counsellor, Chamberlain,
Ladies and gentlemen, drain brimming glasses!
Metternich, Austrian Prince, Grandee of Spain,
Duke of Portella, Lord of Daruvar—

FANNY.

She's coming forward! Look how calm she is!

GENTZ.

Knight of Saint Ann—

FANNY.

He helps us with his chatter,
And doesn't know it.

GENTZ.

Knight o' the Swedish Seraphs,
The Danish Elephant, the Golden Fleece—

FLAMBEAU.

If Nepomuk has one or two more titles—

GENTZ.

Curator of the Fine Arts, Czechish Magnate—

THE DUKE.

She's over-doing it: I move more quickly.

GENTZ.

Bailiff of Malta—

THE DUKE.

Ha! She stops!

GENTZ.

Grand Cross
Of Charles the Third, the Falcon, Bear, and Lion—
Phew—!

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

[*To the* LADY *seated next to* GENTZ.]
He's fainting! Fan him quickly, someone!

GENTZ.

Fellow of all the Academies on earth—!

ALL.

Hurrah!

FLAMBEAU.

And while they clash their glasses, Prince,
She's starting—she has started—

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

[*To the false* DUKE.]
Franz! Not going?

THE DUKE.

All's lost!

FLAMBEAU.

Damnation!

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

[*To the false* DUKE.]

Wait!

THE DUKE.

The Archduchess

Knew nothing of the plot—

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

You grieved me, Franz;

Just now you—

[*She recognizes the* COUNTESS.]

Ah!

THE DUKE.

All's lost.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

But—

[*Offering her hand to the* COUNTESS.]

Well, good-night.

THE COUNTESS.

Ah, Madam—How—?

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Why don't you kiss my hand?

[*The* COUNTESS *goes out.*]

A MASK.

The Duke already gone?

ANOTHER.

He's whimsical.

THE DUKE.

[*Meaningly, to the* ARCHDUCHESS.]

Your hand—as to the Duke?

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Yes, gentle mask.

GENTZ.

And now—

SEVERAL.

Again?

GENTZ.

One word—

VOICES.

Oh, go ahead!

GENTZ.

I wanted to complete my little toast,
But while the Duke was here I couldn't name
The proudest title Metternich can boast of;
But now we're rid of him, I have the honor:—
Ladies and gentlemen, here's the destroyer
Of Bonaparte!

ALL.

Hurrah!—To the Destroyer!

THE DUKE.

[*To* FLAMBEAU.]
What are you doing?

FLAMBEAU.

[*Who is pouring his wine into his gun-barrel.*]

Lest it might go off!

A MASK.

This Bonaparté—

SECOND MASK.

Wasn't marble.

THIRD MASK.

Stucco.

THE DUKE.

What!

FLAMBEAU.

Have a care! An Empire is at stake!

A Mask.

Much overpraised—

Flambeau.

Take care!

Tiburtius.

A middling soldier,
But then he rode a camel while in Egypt;
What more do you want?

A Mask.

Gentz imitates him.

Flambeau.

Lord!

Another Mask.

Do it!

Flambeau.

[*To the* Duke.]
Remember, you're not here at all!

Gentz.

[*Arranging his hair, and striking the conventional attitude.*]
Curl—eye—hand—There!

Flambeau.

Old fool!

The Duke.

He mocks him, yet
Even the mockery's great, for it evokes him.

Tiburtius.

You know he used to tumble off his horse?

Flambeau.

That's what the Ultras always said about him.

A Mask.

His talk was poor.

FLAMBEAU.
Go on!

THE DUKE.
Oh, that's the rule.
What could these worms and insects talk about
If they had not the eagle to abuse?

TIBURTIUS.
His name was not Napoleon at all.

FLAMBEAU.
What!

TIBURTIUS.
That was manufactured. It's so simple!
You want to make a sounding name—

FLAMBEAU.
You idiot!

TIBURTIUS.
Which shall creep into history by and by:
Take three bright, simple vowels: Na—po—le—
And add a nasal sound: On—

A MASK.
Wonderful!

TIBURTIUS.
Yes: Na—po—le, the lightning; On, the thunder.

FLAMBEAU.
That's all!

A MASK.
What was his name?

TIBURTIUS.
What? Don't you know?

A MASK.
Why, no.

TIBURTIUS.
His name was Nicholas.

FLAMBEAU.

[*Bursting out.*]

Be damned!

SEVERAL MASKS.

[*Laughing.*]

Bravo the Veteran!

GENTZ.

[*To* FLAMBEAU.]

Nicholas!—Have a quail.

FLAMBEAU.

[*Taking the dish.*]

But Nicholas was good at winning battles.

A MASK.

And what a funny court he scraped together!

SECOND MASK.

If you talked titles, pedigrees, precedence,
There wasn't a soul who had a word to say.

FLAMBEAU.

Wasn't Cambronne at Court to say the word?

A MASK.

But—in war—

FLAMBEAU.

Oh—!

SECOND MASK.

What did he do?

ANOTHER MASK.

Why, wrote reports.

A MASK.

And always stood about on distant hills.

FLAMBEAU.

By God—!

THE DUKE.

Hush!

TIBURTIUS.

Once a ball was good enough
To wound him in the foot at Ratisbon:
Enough to make a subject for a picture.

FLAMBEAU.

[*To the* DUKE.]
Be calm—!

THE DUKE.

Be calm—!

FLAMBEAU.

Just take away this knife.

TIBURTIUS.

In short—

THE DUKE.

He'd best be careful what he says.

FLAMBEAU.

You must put up with it!

THE DUKE.

Not for an Empire!

TIBURTIUS.

In short this hero was—

FLAMBEAU.

Take care! Take care!

TIBURTIUS.

He was a coward.

THE DUKE.

Oh!

THE FRENCH ATTACHÉ.

No! That's a lie!

ALL.

Eh? What?

TIBURTIUS.

What's that?

ALL.

Who spoke?

GENTZ.

I love a quarrel!

FLAMBEAU.

Aha! Thank God, there was a man among them!

TIBURTIUS.

Who dared—?

THE ATTACHÉ.

I dared, sir!

GENTZ.

He's the Attaché
Of the French Embassy.

TIBURTIUS.

You challenge *me!*
You represent the King, sir!

GENTZ.

Quite amusing!

THE ATTACHÉ.

The King is not in question, but my country.
You are insulting France, when you insult
The man she loved through many glorious years.

TIBURTIUS.

Bûonaparté—

THE ATTACHÉ.

Please say Bonaparte.

TIBURTIUS.

Well, Bonaparte—

THE ATTACHÉ.

The Emperor!

TIBURTIUS.

Your card?

FLAMBEAU.

[*Who has disappeared for a moment, and has come back cloaked.*]

Come! I've got Gentz's cloak. It's lined with fur.

[TIBURTIUS *and the* ATTACHÉ *have exchanged cards.* TIBURTIUS *steps forward and nervously lights a cigar.*]

TIBURTIUS.

[*To a* LACKEY.]

A light.

THE LACKEY.

You hate the Corsican?

TIBURTIUS.

What's that?

THE LACKEY.

Your sister loves his son. Would you surprise them?

TIBURTIUS.

When?

THE LACKEY.

Now.

TIBURTIUS.

Where?

THE LACKEY.

Where I know—

TIBURTIUS.

Wait for me here.

Austria shall be relieved.

THE DUKE.

[*Placing his hand on the* ATTACHÉ'S *shoulder.*]

I thank you, sir.

THE ATTACHÉ.

[*Turning.*]

What for, sir?

THE DUKE.
Hush.

THE ATTACHÉ.
The Duke!

THE DUKE.
A plot.

THE ATTACHÉ.
Amazement!

THE DUKE.
I've nothing but my secret. Now it's yours.
We meet to-night at Wagram. *Be* there.

THE ATTACHÉ.
!!

THE DUKE.
Are you not one of us?

THE ATTACHÉ.
I am the King's.

THE DUKE.
But you're to fight a duel for my Father.
And so we're somewhat brothers. Fare-you-well.

THE ATTACHÉ.
You hope to win me?

THE DUKE.
I am sure to win you.
Did not my Sire win Philippe de Ségur?

THE ATTACHÉ.
To-morrow I return to France. I warn you—

THE DUKE.
You are a future Marshal of the Empire.

THE ATTACHÉ.
I warn you, if my regiment meets yours
I shall not hesitate to fire.

THE DUKE.

Of course not.
Shake hands before we cut each other's throats.

THE ATTACHÉ.

If you have any messages for Paris,
I get there on the fourth; I should be happy—

THE DUKE.

I hope to be there, sir, ahead of you.

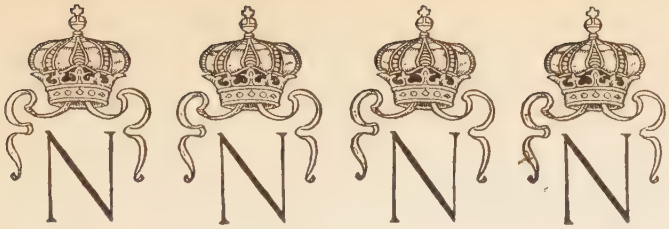
THE ATTACHÉ.

Yet, if I reach the—kingdom—ere you come?

THE DUKE.

Salute for me the Column of Vendôme!

CURTAIN.



THE FIFTH ACT

The battlefield of Wagram. Night. A small hill running off toward the left. A signpost stands on the hill.

The DUKE *is standing on the summit of the hill gazing across the battlefield.* PROKESCH *and* FLAMBEAU *are talking together in undertones near the front.*

FLAMBEAU.

WAGRAM!

THE DUKE.

[*Dreaming.*]

"My son shall reign—a mighty sovereign—"

FLAMBEAU.

Capital bit of country for the harvest.

THE DUKE.

"His task to foster whatsoe'er is good."

FLAMBEAU.

What solemn prayer is he reciting?

PROKESCH.

Hush!

THE DUKE.

"Complete my work, and not avenge my death—
All patriots—"

[*To* PROKESCH.]

The horses?

PROKESCH.

No, not yet.

THE DUKE.

"He would but ape me, if he made great wars—"

PROKESCH.

He is rehearsing all his Father's counsels.

FLAMBEAU.

Hush!

THE DUKE.

"He shall scorn all parties—"

[*To* PROKESCH.]

Well? The horses.

PROKESCH.

Too soon, my Lord.

THE DUKE.

Like an impatient lover
I've come too early to my tryst with France.

[*He takes a few strides and finds himself in front of a sign-post.*]

Their sign-post! Is it true that I shall move
Unhindered by their hideous black and yellow?
How good to read upon the gleaming white
"Road to Saint Cloud" instead of "Grosshofen."
Grosshofen? Now I think of it, I ordered
My regiment to Grosshofen at dawn.

FLAMBEAU.

What!

THE DUKE.

Yes; I gave the order yesterday,
Before I knew.

FLAMBEAU.

We shall be far away.

[*An old man comes out of the cottage.*]

THE DUKE.

Who's that?

FLAMBEAU.

He's ours. His hut our meeting-place.
Old soldier. Shows the battle-field to strangers.

THE OLD MAN.

There—on the left—

FLAMBEAU.

No, thanks. I know it.

THE DUKE.

Why
Does he serve us?

THE OLD MAN.

I was dying yonder;
The great Napoleon passed—

THE DUKE.

He always rode.
Over a battle-field.

THE OLD MAN.

The Emperor stopped
And had me cared for by his leach—

THE DUKE.

Ivan.

THE OLD MAN.

So, if his son is weary of Vienna,
I'll help him go.—My arm—before his eyes!

FLAMBEAU.

It isn't everybody has the honor
Of having limbs off in Napoleon's presence.

THE OLD MAN.

'Twas war-time; so we fought.

FLAMBEAU.

We died.

THE OLD MAN.

We died.

FLAMBEAU.

We marched.

THE OLD MAN.

We marched.

FLAMBEAU.

We fired into the haze.

THE OLD MAN.

We fired.

FLAMBEAU.

Some grimy officer rode up,
And roared, "We've conquered!"

THE OLD MAN.

So he roared to us.

FLAMBEAU.

What?—So he did.
[*Pointing to the* DUKE.]
Suppose he heard!

THE DUKE.

I hear.

THE OLD MAN.

Bah! My geraniums flourish.

FLAMBEAU.

Shouldn't wonder.
For on this spot eleven drummer-boys—

THE DUKE.

Eleven drummer-boys—?

FLAMBEAU.

I see them now!
Eleven bullet-heads, as like as peas,
Between the flapping of their foolish ears,
Who marched, they knew not whence, nor why, nor whither,
But gayly marched and rolled their rataplan!
We used to chaff them, for their funny ways

Made them the darlings of the sutler's wife.
But when they beat the charge like little rabbits—
Eleven drums with two-and-twenty sticks—
They set our bayonets thrilling with their thunder;
The quivering zigzags seemed to cry aloud,
"Our lightning's not in vain!"—Well, on this spot,
A brazen devil hiccoughed fire and steel
And took them in the flank; yes! all the eleven!
But, by the Lord! you should have seen the woman!
She gathered up her apron like a gleaner,
And madly gleaned the little ebony drumsticks.
[*He clears his throat.*]
Only to speak of it gives me a cold—!
[*He picks a red geranium.*]
Here's how to make a mere geranium
A ribbon of the Legion: keep one petal.
What? You look well upon my velvet lining?
[*To the* DUKE.]
Is this what you bestowed upon me, Sire?

THE DUKE.

I gave a phantom—

FLAMBEAU.

And I wear a flower!

THE DUKE.

[*Seeing the conspirators enter.*]
Those shadows—?

MARMONT.

Friends.

THE DUKE.

[*Turning.*]
Marmont?

MARMONT.

Good luck, my Lord!

THE DUKE.

Why do the others stand so far away?

MARMONT.

Because they fear they may disturb your Highness,
And, Sire, you are already Emperor!

THE DUKE.

The word strikes strangely on my wondering ear—
The Emperor! What Emperor is here?
This youth of twenty on the throne?
As through a casement now myself I see
Pass down the shouting street; 'tis good to be
Young, and the first Napoleon's son!
All Notre Dame invades my dreaming soul,
I see the incense, hear the organ roll,
A nation offers up a prayer!
God! what great causes may be served by kings!
How they can love! Achieve what righteous things!
Prokesch, the Future shows too fair!
O France, who with thy blood didst write our name,
With happy days I will repay the fame;
I come, triumphant in my pride.
Sun on my flags; the air with shouts is rent.
The Champs Elysées, with their chestnut scent,
Waft me fair welcome as I ride.

FLAMBEAU.

The women stand on chairs to see your face,
Each the fair symbol of Parisian grace,
The guns in wreaths of flowers are dressed;
Fierce Paris madly hails your sovereignship.

THE DUKE.

It were like kissing France upon the lip
If Paris took me to her breast.

FLAMBEAU.

And you will hear the sufferer's complaint;

Do you not feel your hand already faint
Signing so many an amnesty?

THE DUKE.

The lies they've told me make the truth more dear,
Oh, Freedom, Freedom, thou hast nought to fear
From one so late from bonds set free!
What can I do to foster noble aims?
Treviso, Montebello, these are names
Their sons inherit without fear,
But other names are glorious, and since
My Father would have made Corneille a Prince
I'll make our Victor Hugo Peer!
I'll do—I'll do—I'll be the poor man's shield!
The heroic savour, rising from this field,
Gives me a foretaste of my home;
Wagram! 'Twas well I hither came to drain
The stirrup-cup upon thy glorious plain!
Oh, my beloved France!—I come—!
Ah—!

FLAMBEAU.

What is it?

THE DUKE.

Nothing.

PROKESCH.

You are suffering!

THE DUKE.

Yes, to the marrow, but a gallop cures me.
Stars twinkle in the skies like golden rowels,
Here are the steeds, and we're to ride to France!
Embrace me, friend!

PROKESCH.

Emotion strangles me.

THE DUKE.

Brother!

PROKESCH.

My Lord!

THE DUKE.

Ah, hush!—The saddle-girth!—
Oh, it's delicious to escape on horseback
Through such a night, in dancing-pumps!

PROKESCH.

[*To* MARMONT, *pointing to the Conspirators.*]
Those youths—
Why have they come?

MARMONT.

Why, that the world may know
They also were conspirators!

THE DUKE.

A whip!

A CONSPIRATOR.

[*Introducing himself to the* DUKE.]
The Viscount of Otranto—

THE DUKE.

Fouché's son!

FLAMBEAU.

[*To the* DUKE.]
No matter now.
[*Arranging the horse.*]
The stirrup long?

THE DUKE.

No; short.

SECOND CONSPIRATOR.

[*Bending low to the* DUKE.]
Goubeaux, the Countess Camerata's agent.
Your humble servant Goubeaux—

THE DUKE.

Very well.

GOUBEAUX.

[*Bowing once more.*]
The Countess's chief agent.

THIRD CONSPIRATOR.

[*Advancing eagerly.*]
Pionnet—
I'm Pionnet. I represent King Joseph;
On his behalf I brought the subsidies.

THE DUKE.

[*To* FLAMBEAU, *busy with the horse.*]
Only the snaffle—

FOURTH CONSPIRATOR.

I arranged the guides
And relays, and at yonder village, Sire,
Disguises—Morchain.

FLAMBEAU.

All right, Whatsyourname.

FOURTH CONSPIRATOR.

Morchain!

FIFTH CONSPIRATOR.

I got the passports. Thankless task!
See how the seals are forged! Guibert.

ALL.

[*Each mentioning his name.*]
Goubeaux—
Morchain—Otranto—Pionnet—

FLÁMBEAU.

We know.

ONE OF THE CONSPIRATORS.

Your Father had a memory for names.

SIXTH CONSPIRATOR.

[*Hurrying up.*]
Borowski, Sire! It was my glorious task
To hire the uniform the Countess wears!

THE DUKE.

Enough! Enough! I shall remember all,
And best of all the one who has not spoken!
Your name?

[*The man spoken to turns, and the* DUKE *recognizes the* ATTACHÉ.]

What! *You* here!

THE ATTACHÉ.

Not as partisan.
Only as friend. Indeed no slight occasion
Was needed—

FLAMBEAU

[*To the* DUKE.]

Mount!

THE DUKE.

The dawn is in the east,
I seize the reins, and—*Alea jacta est!*

THE ATTACHÉ.

My Lord, if I have sought this rendezvous,
'Twas to defend you—

THE DUKE.

To defend me, sir?

THE ATTACHÉ.

I feared you were in danger—

THE DUKE.

Danger?—What?

THE ATTACHÉ.

The rogue Tiburtius, whom I hope to pink,
Sneaked from the ball and never sent his seconds,
So I ran after him, and saw him meet
Another rogue, and heard the two conspire
To kill you at some rendezvous.

THE DUKE.

The Countess!

THE ATTACHÉ.

The rendezvous was here, as you had told me.
I came. All's well. I go.

THE DUKE.

The rendezvous
Was in the hunting-lodge. They'll kill the Countess!
We must go back!

ALL.

No! No!

A CONSPIRATOR.

Oh, why?

MARMONT.

The Countess—?

PROKESCH.

She can unmask.

THE DUKE.

Alas, you little know her.
She'd die ten times to let me win ten minutes.
Come back!

VOICES.

No!

THE DUKE.

But I cannot—Ah, come back!—
I cannot let them kill her in my absence!

OTRANTO.

Our efforts wasted!

MARMONT.

If we re-conspire
They will not let you fly.

ANOTHER CONSPIRATOR.

And France?

ANOTHER.

The Empire?

THE DUKE.

Back!

MARMONT.

Forward!

THE DUKE.

Back!

MARMONT.

You cast away the crown!

THE DUKE.

To leave her were to cast my soul away!

MARMONT.

One sometimes has to sacrifice—

THE DUKE.

A woman?

MARMONT.

Risk—for a woman—all the chance of triumph—!

FLAMBEAU.

He's a French Prince! That's certain, anyhow!

OTRANTO.

We must abduct him!

FLAMBEAU.

Back!

OTRANTO.

My coach is here.

FLAMBEAU.

I'll run you through the body if you touch him!

THE DUKE.

Back! or with whip uplifted I will charge
After the fashion of Murat, my uncle!

PROKESCH.

Stand back!

THE DUKE.
Help, Prokesch!

VOICES.
We shall have to force him.

THE DUKE.
[*To the* ATTACHÉ.]
And you, who say you came in my defence,
It is by robbing me of faith and scruple,
They would assassinate me truly! Now, defend me!

THE ATTACHÉ.
No, Sire! begone!

THE DUKE.
What, *you!* this base advice?

THE ATTACHÉ.
Go, Sire, I will defend the woman.

THE DUKE.
You?
You cannot.

THE ATTACHÉ.
Not as partisan; as friend.

THE DUKE.
It would ensure my flight.

THE ATTACHÉ.
Begone, my Lord.
Whate'er I do is for the Countess.

THE DUKE.
Yes,
But I—

PROKESCH.
I'll lead him.

THE ATTACHÉ.
Prokesch knows the way.

THE DUKE.

[*Still hesitating.*]
I cannot—

VOICES.

Yes!

MARMONT.

The better way!

VOICES.

Begone.

THE COUNTESS CAMERATA.

[*Entering, still in her disguise.*]
Unhappy boy! Not gone!

THE DUKE.

You!—but they told me—
How could I go?

THE COUNTESS.

On horseback.

THE DUKE.

But your life—!

THE COUNTESS.

A woman's life! What loss would that have been?

THE DUKE.

But—

THE COUNTESS.

You should have abandoned me.

THE DUKE.

But think!

THE COUNTESS.

Think of the time you've lost!

THE DUKE.

Your risks—?

THE COUNTESS.

What risks?

THE DUKE.

And all our fears on your behalf—

THE COUNTESS.

What fears?
Was not your Flambeau, there, my fencing-master?

THE DUKE.

The man—?

THE COUNTESS.

Begone!

THE DUKE.

What did you do?

THE COUNTESS.

Oh, nothing.
Of course he drew his sword, and I drew mine.

THE DUKE.

You fought for me!

THE COUNTESS.

"I did not know," he muttered,
"The Corsican's son had so much skill. I think
He knew it not himself"—But then my voice—

THE DUKE.

Oh! You are wounded!

THE COUNTESS.

Scratched across the fingers.
My voice betrayed me. Back he sprang! "A woman!"
"Defend yourself!" said I. "I should be laughed at,
For you are not the Chevalier d'Eon!"
"Defend yourself, I'm a Napoleon!"
Feeling my blade slip snake-like over his,
He lunges, and I make—

FLAMBEAU.

Our secret stroke!

THE COUNTESS.

One! Two!

FLAMBEAU.

That must have been a rough surprise!

THE COUNTESS.

'Twas a surprise from which he'll not recover.

THE DUKE.

Heavens! And the girl—!

THE COUNTESS.

What does she matter now?

THE DUKE.

But, did she come?

THE COUNTESS.

Well—No, then! When the door
Was broken open by a furious fist,
I was alone. She had not come.

THE DUKE.

That's well.

THE COUNTESS.

But servants came; and if I were arrested
All would be known too soon. I lost my head.
I stumbled out. I heard I know not whom
Sending to fetch the Prefect of Police;
And so I fled upon your saddle-horse.
I've killed it—I'm exhausted—

THE DUKE.

Look! She swoons!

THE COUNTESS.

After what I had done I hoped at least
To hear from witnesses that you were gone!

A CONSPIRATOR.

You were pursued!—And in a moment—

THE DUKE.

Take care of her. Conceal her in the hut.

A CONSPIRATOR.

Yes.

THE COUNTESS.

Go!

THE DUKE.

But are you better?

THE COUNTESS.

Not yet gone?
For God's sake, go! Ah! could your Father see you
Waiting, enfeebled, tender, hesitating,
With what contempt he'd shrug his epaulettes!

THE DUKE.

Good-bye!

FLAMBEAU.

We're caught! Too late!

SEDLNIZKY.

[*Entering with police officers; he advances to the* COUNTESS, *whom he mistakes for the* DUKE.]

Too late, my Lord.

THE COUNTESS.

[*Furiously, to the* DUKE.]
Ah, Temporizer! Dreamer! Cold Idealist!

SEDLNIZKY.

[*Who has turned to the person addressed by the* COUNTESS *and recognized the* DUKE, *starts, and, addressing him.*]

Your Highness—

[*He turns to the* COUNTESS.]

Your High—

[*To the* DUKE.]

Your High—

FLAMBEAU.

He's puzzled!

SEDLNIZKY.

So that's it!

FLAMBEAU.

You've been drinking. You see double.

SEDLNIZKY.

Count Prokesch, I must ask you to retire.

[PROKESCH *exit.*]

FLAMBEAU.

We shan't be crowned just yet by Uncle Fesch!

SEDLNIZKY.

[*Indicating the* ATTACHÉ.]
Lead off this gentleman. You, sir, in this?
Your Government shall hear of it.

THE DUKE.

I swear
He was not of the plot!

THE ATTACHÉ.

Forgive me, Sire,
Since they're arresting us I take my share.

THE DUKE.

[*To the* ATTACHÉ, *as he is led off.*]
Good-bye, then.

[*To* SEDLNIZKY.]

Now, policeman, show your zeal.

SEDLNIZKY.

[*To his men, pointing to the* COUNTESS.]
Take the false Prince wherever—she—belongs.

THE DUKE.

[*Haughtily.*]
With all the honors due to me!

THE COUNTESS.

That voice!
Ah, hapless child! You would have made a leader!

[*She is led off.*]

SEDLNIZKY.
As for the rest, we'll shut our eyes: *Verb. sap.*

A CONSPIRATOR.
I think—

MARMONT.
To serve the cause—

ANOTHER CONSPIRATOR.
We'd better go.

ANOTHER.
Reserve our strength—

ANOTHER.
For later—

ANOTHER.
Bide our time.

[*All disappear.*]

FLAMBEAU.
[*To* SEDLNIZKY.]
Open your eyes again. Here's one more left.

THE DUKE.
Oh, fly for my sake!

FLAMBEAU.
Yours?

SEDLNIZKY.
[*To a policeman.*]
'Tis he!

POLICEMAN.
Perhaps.
Wanted in Paris.

SEDLNIZKY.
How can we make sure!

[*The* POLICEMAN *hands him a paper, which he reads.*]

"Nose ordinary, eyes ordinary,

Mouth ordinary—" Extraordinary!
[*Watching* FLAMBEAU.]
Two bullets in his—back.

FLAMBEAU.
A lie!

SEDLNIZKY.
Of course.

FLAMBEAU.
I'm lost. All right; I'll have my little joke,
And deck myself in flowers ere dropping out.

SEDLNIZKY.
You answer to the name of Seraph Flambeau.

FLAMBEAU.
No, sir! That name's not good enough to die with.
I'll be drum-major in the Dance of Death;
Not merely Seraph, nor Flambeau, the torch.
I broaden! I'm Archangel Chandelier!

THE DUKE.
Will you deliver him to France?

SEDLNIZKY.
Yes.

THE DUKE.
Like a thief?
You have no right, sir—!

SEDLNIZKY.
But we'll take it.

THE DUKE.
Heavens!

FLAMBEAU.
'Twas getting past a joke that I should never
Be present when they wanted to behead me.

SEDLNIZKY.
Also his decoration is illegal.
Take off that ribbon!

FLAMBEAU.

Take it. But it grows
As often as I choose on my old hide.
[*Unseen by the others he stabs himself.*]

SEDLNIZKY.

Take off his cloak!
[*When the cloak is removed, the spot of blood shows like the ribbon of the Legion of Honor on* FLAMBEAU'S *shirt.*]
What's that?

FLAMBEAU.

Looks rather well!

SEDLNIZKY.

Come! Make an end!

FLAMBEAU.

[*To the* DUKE.]
My Lord, this leaves me not
Till death!

SEDLNIZKY.

What! He has pinned another on!

FLAMBEAU.

You cannot make an end! I've pinned another;
And when that's gone, another, and another!

THE DUKE.

What will they do?

FLAMBEAU.

What did they do to Ney?

THE DUKE.

Impossible—!

FLAMBEAU.

A little firing-party—
Rrrrrr!

THE DUKE.

Ah!

FLAMBEAU.

I always laughed at bullets;
But French ones? Never! None of that, Lisette!

THE DUKE.

You will not give him up?

SEDLNIZKY.

Without delay!

FLAMBEAU.

Seraph, your wings are clipped; good-night, my friend!

SEDLNIZKY.

March!

THE DUKE.

Look! He staggers! Flambeau!—Look!

POLICEMAN.

He's falling!

FLAMBEAU.

[*On his knees; knocking off the policeman's hat.*]
The Duke is speaking! Take that stovepipe off!

THE DUKE.

Flambeau, you've killed yourself!

FLAMBEAU.

No! I've pinned on
An everlasting ribbon of the Legion!

THE DUKE.

I'll not allow one of your men to touch him:
What! the clean soldier touched by soiled policemen!
Leave us alone together. Go!—Begone!

FLAMBEAU.

My Lord—!

SEDLNIZKY.

[*To a policeman, pointing to the old man of the hut.*]
Lead off that peasant.

[*The old man is led off.*]

THE DUKE.

I'll await
My regiment. 'Tis summoned here at dawn.
The standards shall salute him, and the drums,
And my own soldiers shall uplift his body.

SEDLNIZKY.

[*To a policeman.*]
Where are the horses?

THE POLICEMAN.

[*Aside to him.*]
Gone.

SEDLNIZKY.

Then let him be.
[*To the* DUKE.]
Highness, we cede.

THE DUKE.

Begone!

SEDLNIZKY.

I understand—

THE DUKE.

I turn you out.

SEDLNIZKY.

My Lord!

THE DUKE.

I turn you out!
For on the field of Wagram I'm at home!
[SEDLNIZKY *and the policeman go.*]

FLAMBEAU.

It's funny, all the same, that on this field
Where I was wounded for the Father, now
I perish for the son.

THE DUKE.

No! not for me!
It is for him: I am not worth your death.

FLAMBEAU.

For him?

THE DUKE.

For him! This is the field of Wagram.

FLAMBEAU.

Ah, yes!—I die—

THE DUKE.

Do you not recognize
Wagram, the field, the hill, the pointed steeple?

FLAMBEAU.

Yes!

THE DUKE.

Do you see the Austrian cannon yonder
All painted yellow, belching fire and smoke?

FLAMBEAU.

The battle—!

THE DUKE.

Do you hear the noise of it?

FLAMBEAU.

I die at Wagram! Ah! I die at Wagram!

THE DUKE.

Do you not see the wounded horse rush by,
Dragging his slaughtered rider by the stirrups?
We are at Wagram! 'Tis a solemn moment.
Davoust has come to turn Neusiedel's flank;
The Emperor has raised his little spy-glass;
You have been wounded by a bayonet,
And I have brought you to this little hill.

FLAMBEAU.

But the light cavalry? Haven't they charged?

THE DUKE.

Yonder the blue, striped with white shoulder-belts:
Those are the Infantry.

FLAMBEAU.
With General Reille!

THE DUKE.
The Emperor should send Oudinot to help!
He lets his left be crushed!

FLAMBEAU.
Ah! that's his cunning!

THE DUKE.
They fight! They fight! Macdonald hastens up,
And wounded Masséna drives slowly by.

FLAMBEAU.
If the Archduke deploys his right he's lost.

THE DUKE.
All's well!

FLAMBEAU.
They fight?

THE DUKE.
The Prince of Auersberg
Is taken by the Polish Lancers of the Guard.

FLAMBEAU.
The Emperor? What's the Emperor doing?

THE DUKE.
Watching.

FLAMBEAU.
Is the Archduke caught in the little 'un's trap?

THE DUKE.
The distant dust-cloud yonder is Nansouty.

FLAMBEAU.
Has the Archduke not yet deployed his right?

THE DUKE.
The smoke is Lauriston—

FLAMBEAU.

But the Archduke?

THE DUKE.

Now he deploys his right.

FLAMBEAU.

His goose is cooked.

THE DUKE.

Here come the guns!

FLAMBEAU.

I thirst!—I stifle—Drink!
What—is—the—Emperor doing?

THE DUKE.

With a smile
He shuts his little spy-glass.

FLAMBEAU.

[*Closing his eyes.*]

Victory!

THE DUKE.

Flambeau!

[*He looks at him, and moves away a little.*]

This dying soldier frightens me.
Yet 'tis not strange a dying grenadier
Should fall asleep upon this field of glory.
The field is well acquainted with his likes.

[*He bends over him and cries.*]

Yes! Victory! The soldiers toss their shakos!

FLAMBEAU.

[*In his death-rattle.*]
I thirst—!

DISTANT VOICES.

I thirst!—I thirst!

THE DUKE.

[*Shuddering.*]

What are those echoes?

A Voice.

I thirst—!

The Duke.

O God!

The Same Voices.

[*Very distant.*]

I die—I die!

The Duke.

[*With horror.*]

His voice
Reverberates beneath the lurid sky.

The Voices.

I die—!

The Duke.

I understand! His cries of death
Are, for this vale which knows them all by heart,
As the first measures of a well-known song.
The plain takes up the moaning death has hushed.

The Plain.

Ah!—Ah!

The Duke.

I understand! complaints and sobs!—
'Tis Wagram's field, remembering aloud!

The Plain.

Ah—! Ah—!

The Duke.

[*Looking at* Flambeau.]

How still he lies!—I must begone!
For 'tis as if he'd fallen in the battle!
[*And bending over him he murmurs.*]
Thus and no otherwise they must have looked!
The uniform—the blood—!
[*He is about to go, but suddenly, with horror.*]
Another! There!
There—! Everywhere—! The same accusing shapes!
They're dying thus as far as eye can reach!

THE PLAIN.

Alas—!

THE DUKE.

I hear them speaking in the gloom!

VOICES.

My brow bleeds—! My leg is dead—! My arm hangs loose!—
I'm crushed beneath this gun!

THE DUKE.

The battle-field!
I've willed it: it has risen.

VOICES.

Water!—Water
Upon my gash! Ah! tell me what I've broken!
Ah! do not let me perish in this ditch!

THE DUKE.

Forests of arms are quivering in the plain;
I tread upon a field of epaulettes.

A VOICE.

Help!

THE DUKE.

And I slip on leather shoulder-belts!

A VOICE.

Dragoon, reach me your hands!

ANOTHER.

They're shot away!

THE DUKE.

Ah! whither turn?

VOICES.

The ravens!

THE DUKE.

Horrible!
The wooden soldiers ranged upon my table!

THE VOICES.

Horses have trampled on me! Drink!—The ravens!
I'm dying!—How I suffer!—God forgive me!
The ravens!—Help!

THE DUKE.

Alas! Where are the Eagles?

THE VOICES.

Water!—This brook runs blood!—Yet let me drink!
I thirst!—I die!—God's curse!—I'm hurt!—Mother!

THE DUKE.

Ah!

A VOICE.

For God's sake! put a bullet through my head!

THE DUKE.

Ah! Now I understand my wakeful nights—

A VOICE.

Curse the Light Cavalry! They're base assassins!

THE DUKE.

The racking cough that wakes me in a sweat!

A VOICE.

I cannot drag my leg! Oh, wrench it off!

THE DUKE.

The blood I spit! I know whose blood it is!

THE PLAIN.

Ah!—Ah—!

THE DUKE.

And all the arms! And all the arms I see!
The handless wrists! The hands with shattered fingers!
The monstrous harvest which a mighty wind
Bends me-ward with a curse! Oh! Mercy! Mercy!
Old Cuirassier, groaning with outstretched hands—
Horrible agonized hands with bloody wrists!—
Mercy! Poor little Private of the Guards,
Who slowly raise your livid face to mine!

Look not upon me with those glazing eyes!
Why do you creep upon me through the gloom?
God! 'Tis as though you strove to utter cries!
Why do you all suck in a mighty breath?
Why do you open horror-sated lips?
What will you cry?—What?—What?

ALL THE VOICES.

Long live the Emperor!

THE DUKE.

Ah! Pardon, for the glory's sake!—I thank you.
I understand. I am the expiation.
All was not paid, and I complete the price.
'Twas fated I should seek his battle-field,
And here, above the multitudinous dead,
Be the white victim, growing daily whiter,
Renouncing, praying, asking but to suffer,
Yearning toward heaven, like sacrificial incense!
And while betwixt the heavens and this field
I am outstretched with all my soul and body,
Father, I feel the shuddering furrows rise,
I feel the hill upheaved beneath my feet
To lift me gently to the stooping heavens!
'Tis meet and right the battle-field should offer
This sacrifice, that henceforth it may bear
Pure and unstained its name of Victory.
Wagram, behold me! Ransom of old days,
Son, offered for, alas! how many sons!
Above the dreadful haze wherein thou stirrest,
Uplift me, Wagram, in thy scarlet hands!
It must be so! I know it! Feel it! Will it!
The breath of death has rustled through my hair!
The shudder of death has passed athwart my soul!
I am all white: a sacramental Host!
What more reproaches can they hurl, O Father,
Against our hapless fate?—Oh, hush! I add

In silence Schönbrunn to Saint Helena!—
'Tis done!—But if the Eaglet is resigned
To perish like the innocent, yielding swan,
Nailed in the gloom above some lofty gate,
He must become the high and holy signal
That scares the ravens and calls back the eagles.
There must be no more moanings in the field,
Nor dreadful writhings in the underwood.
Bear on thy wings, O whirlwind of the plain,
The shouts of conquerors and songs of triumph!

[*A proud and joyous clamor arises in the distance.*]

I've changed the moanings into trumpet blasts!

[*The wind wafts vague sounds of trumpet-calls.*]

I've earned the right to see what crawled and writhed,
Suddenly leap into a phantom charge!

[*Noise as of a cavalcade. The* VOICES, *which before were lugubrious, now call to each other with commands and signals.*]

THE VOICES.

Forward!

[*The drums of the wind beat the charge.*]

THE DUKE.

The pomp and pageantry of battle,
The dust that's raised by charging cavalry!

VOICES.

Charge!

THE DUKE.

The wild laughter of the fierce Hussars!

VOICES.

[*In a shout of epic laughter.*]
Ha! Ha!

THE DUKE.

Now, Goddess of the hundred mouths,
Victory, from whose lips I've torn the gag,
Sing in the distance!

VOICES.

[*Far away.*]

Form battalions!

THE DUKE.

[*Upright in the first glow of dawn.*]

Glory! O God, to battle in this blaze!

VOICES.

Fire!—Half-columns, by your right, advance!

THE DUKE.

To battle in this tumult you commanded!
O Father! Father!—

[*Amid the noise of battle, which is dying away in the distance, a haughty, metallic voice is heard, preceded and followed by a roll of drums.*]

THE VOICE.

Officers—and—men!

THE DUKE.

[*In wild delirium, drawing his sword.*]

I come!—I fight!—Laugh, fife! and banners wave!
Fix bayonets! Fall on the whitecoats! Forward!

[*And while the dream-sounds die away toward the right, swept by the wind, all of a sudden, on the left, a real military band bursts out; and abruptly, like the awaking out of a dream, there is the contrast between the furious battle-music of the French, and a tame march of Schubert's, Austrian and dance-like, drawing near in the rosy glow of the morning.*]

THE DUKE.

[*Who has turned with a shudder.*]

What white thing marching through the dawning day?

The Austrian Infantry!

[*Beside himself, and urging along imaginary Grenadiers.*]

Ha! Up! and at them!

The enemy!—Fall on them!—Crush them!

Follow on! Follow on! We'll pass across their bodies!

[*With his sword high he rushes at the first ranks of an Austrian regiment which appears on the road.*]

AN OFFICER.

[*Throwing himself on the* DUKE *and stopping him.*]

For God's sake, Prince!—This is your regiment!

THE DUKE.

[*As if awaking.*]

Ah—? This is my—?

[*He falls back; passes his hand across his forehead, and gazes wildly at the white soldiers who march past to the sound of the fife. He sees his destiny, and accepts it. The arm he had raised for the charge sinks slowly, his fist falls on his hip; his sword falls into the regulation position, and, stiff as an automaton, with a toneless and mechanical voice, the voice of an Austrian officer, he cries:*]

Halt! Front turn! Eyes right!

THE CURTAIN FALLS AS THE DRILL BEGINS.

THE SIXTH ACT

The DUKE'S *bedroom at Schönbrunn. The walls are covered with Gobelin tapestry. Through folding-doors on the left there is a glimpse of the china-cabinet. There are also folding-doors on the right and in the centre. Empire furniture. A little camp-bedstead stands almost in the middle of the room. Many bunches of violets are scattered about.*

The DUKE *is discovered buried in a deep arm-chair, his fingers idly toying with a large bunch of violets. The* ARCHDUCHESS *is offering him a glass of milk.* DOCTOR MALFATTI *is seated at the back of the room.*

THE DUKE.

AGAIN? Well, there, then.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

No, you've left a little.

THE DUKE.

You?—Why, I thought you ill!

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

They've let me come.

Thank heaven!—And you?

THE DUKE.

Why, if you leave your sick-bed
I must be worse indeed.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Come, now, that's nonsense!
You know you're better.

[*She examines the cup the* DUKE *hands her.*]

There, that's finished.

[*She calls the* DOCTOR, *who has been seated at the back of the room.*]

His Highness drank his milk.

THE DOCTOR.

I'm very glad.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

How good it was of him!

THE DOCTOR.

How good!

THE DUKE.

How hard—
When I had dreamed of history's reward,
And when ambition seared my soul—How hard,
To be content with praise for drinking milk!

[*To the violets on his pillow.*]

Oh, ball of freshness laid upon my fever,
Dear flowers that bring the Spring into my room—!

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

All bring you violets now?

THE DUKE.

Ah, yes! Already.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Hush! As an act of gratitude to God
For saving us—since both of us are better—
I am to take the Sacrament this morning.
I think—I hope—Franz, will you not come, too?

THE DUKE.

[*After a long look at her.*]
Ah, now I see the pious trick you'd play me!
This is the end!
[*He rises.*]

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

I knew you'd say so!
[*With forced playfulness.*]
Think!
The etiquette—!

THE DUKE.

The—etiquette?

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

You know
You cannot be deceived. When Austrian Princes
Receive the—

THE DUKE.

Last—?

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Oh! not that mournful word!—
All the Imperial Family must be present.

THE DUKE.

That's true.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

But we're alone! I've had an altar
Placed in that cabinet; and look about you:
No sign of an Archduke or an Archduchess.
The Prelate says the Mass for you and me;
'Tis but the ordinary Mass; you see
This Sacrament is not—

THE DUKE.

The last. 'Tis true.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Well? Are you coming? Hark! The Mass begins!

THE DUKE.

'Tis true, the illustrious audience should be present.

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

We've but the Prelate and the Acolyte.

THE DUKE.

So, then, I am to have a respite—?

[*They go out.*]

[*As soon as they have disappeared, the opposite door opens and* GENERAL HARTMANN *ushers in the* COURT.]

HARTMANN.

Come!

Place yourselves here; and when, with humbled eyes
The Duke is prostrate to receive the Host—

ONE OF THE PRINCES.

We'll place ourselves—

A PRINCESS.

[*To a child.*]

Hush!

HARTMANN.

In that awful moment
When nothing can distract a Christian's thoughts
I'll softly ope the door. For one brief second
Your Highnesses will see his golden head;
Then I shall close the door, and thus he'll rise,
Not knowing he received, before the Court,
As usage dictates, the Viaticum.

METTERNICH.

Silence!

PROKESCH.

[*Who has just brought in the* COUNTESS *and* THERESA.]

They have permitted me to place you
Behind the Imperial Family, and thus,
Above the heads of Princes bent in prayer,

O'er whom mysterious fate is hovering,
And pallid children clasping pitiful hands,
For the last time you'll see the dying Duke.

THERESA.

Oh, thank you, thank you, sir!

HARTMANN.

Let no one stir
When the door opens!

MARIA LOUISA.

Ah! The sacring-bell!

A PRINCESS.

It is the Elevation!

[*All kneel.*]

HARTMANN.

Gently!

THE COUNTESS CAMERATA.

[*To* METTERNICH.]

Well,
Prince? Is there nothing you regret?

METTERNICH.

No, nothing.
I did my duty, Madam—often suffered
While doing it—for my country's weal, my master's,
And in defence of ancient privilege.

THE COUNTESS.

You've no regrets?

METTERNICH.

No. None.

MARIA LOUISA.

The *Agnus Dei.*

[*To* HARTMANN, *who very gently opens the door a very little way and peers through.*]

Let not the door creak as you open it!

METTERNICH.

None. But he was a noble Prince. I kneel
To-day not only to the Lamb of God!

HARTMANN.

The Prelate has uncovered the Ciborium!

ALL.

Oh!

HARTMANN.

Rigid silence! I'm about to open!

ALL.

[*With emotion.*]
Oh!

HARTMANN.

I open!

[*He silently thrusts the wings of the folding-doors open. All the* COURT *is prostrate. There is a vague glimpse of candle light. A moment's pause of profound emotion and silence.* THERESA *slowly rises to look across the kneeling forms; she looks and sees.*]

THERESA.

[*Amid the sobs which overmaster her.*]
Oh! to behold him thus!

[*Movement.* GENERAL HARTMANN *has swiftly closed the doors. Everybody has risen.*]

HARTMANN.

Retire! He heard the sobbing!

[*All have hurried toward the door on the right, but the door on the left opens quickly; the* DUKE *appears on the threshold and sees them all standing before him. After a long look which takes in the situation:*]

THE DUKE.

Ah!—I see.

[*He draws himself up, and comes toward them with sudden majesty.*]

I thank the breaking heart that broke the silence;
Let her who wept feel no remorse for weeping:
They had no right to rob me of my death.

[*To the* ARCHDUKES *and* ARCHDUCHESSES, *who withdraw respectfully.*]

But leave me now, my Austrian family!
"My son was born a Frenchman; until death
Let him remember that." And I remember.

[*To the* PRINCES *who are leaving.*]

Farewell.

[*To the others.*]

Whose was the breaking heart?

THERESA.

[*Who has remained humbly on her knees in a corner.*]

My Lord—!

THE DUKE.

[*Approaching her, and speaking with great tenderness.*]

You are not very reasonable! Once
Over your book you wept to see me live
An Austrian Prince with flowers in my coat;
And now you weep because that life has killed me.

THERESA.

The tryst—

THE DUKE.

Well?

THERESA.

I was there.

THE DUKE.

Alas, poor soul!

THERESA.

Yes—

THE DUKE.

Why?

THERESA.
Because I love you.

THE DUKE.
[*To the* COUNTESS.]
Madam,
You hid this from me. Why?

THE COUNTESS.
Because I love you.

THE DUKE.
[*To* THERESA *and the* COUNTESS.]
Who brought you both to see me?
[THERESA *and the* COUNTESS *look at the* ARCHDUCHESS.]

THE DUKE.
[*To the* ARCHDUCHESS.]
You?

THE ARCHDUCHESS.
Myself.

THE DUKE.
Why so much thoughtfulness?

THE ARCHDUCHESS.
Because I love you.

THE DUKE.
Women have loved me as they love a child—
[*The* THREE WOMEN *make a gesture of protest.*]
Ah, yes! The child they pity, spoil, and shelter—
And with maternal fingers, on my brow
Still sought the golden curls which Lawrence painted.

THE COUNTESS.
No, no! We knew the struggles of your soul!

THE DUKE.
And history itself will not record
The Prince whose soul was seared with all ambitions,

But see the solemn, rosy, fair-haired child
Tricked out in laces in his little goat-cart,
Holding the globe as 'twere an air-balloon.

MARIA LOUISA.

Speak to me! I am here! Give me a word
To soothe remorse, for through no fault of mine
I was too small beside your mighty dreams.
I have the thriftless conscience of a bird!
The tinkling bells that jangle in my brain
Have never ceased till now. Look at me now!
Speak to me now! Forgive me now!

THE DUKE.

O God!
Inspire me with the deep, yet tender word
With which a son forgives his mother.

MARIA LOUISA.

Franz,
The cradle which you asked them for last night—

A LACKEY.

'Tis here.

[*He goes out to fetch it.*]

THE DUKE.

[*Looking at* METTERNICH.]
Ah, my Lord Chancellor, I die
Too soon for you; and you should weep.

METTERNICH.

My Lord—!

THE DUKE.

I was your weapon and my death disarms you!
Europe, which never dared to say you nay,
When you were he who could unchain the Eaglet,
Listening to-morrow, will take heart, and say
"I do not hear it stirring in its cage!"

METTERNICH.

My Lord! My Lord!

[*The great enamelled cradle is brought in.*]

THE DUKE.

The cradle Paris gave me!
My splendid cradle, Prudhon's masterpiece!
Amidst its gold and mother-o'-pearl I slept,
A babe, whose christening was a coronation.
Place it beside this little bed, whereon
My Father slept when victory fanned his slumbers.
Closer! until its laces graze the sheets.
Alas! how near my cradle to my death-bed!

[*He points to the gap between the cradle and the bed.*]

And all my life lies in that narrow space!

THERESA.

Oh!—

THE DUKE.

In that gap, too narrow and too dark,
Fate ne'er let fall a single pin of glory.
Lay me upon the bed.

DIETRICHSTEIN.

How pale he grows!

THE DUKE.

Ah, I was greater in my cradle, than
I am upon this bed; and women rocked me—
Yes, I had three to rock me, and they sang
Their strange old songs: dear songs of Mistress Marchand!
Oh, who will lull me now with cradle-songs?

MARIA LOUISA.

Is not your mother here to sing to you?

THE DUKE.

Do you know any songs of France?

MARIA LOUISA.

Why—no.

THE DUKE.

[*To* THERESA.]
And you?

THERESA.

Perhaps.

THE DUKE.

Oh, sing below your breath.
"The rain falls, Shepherdess" and "May is come,"
And sing "Upon the bridge that spans the Rhone,"
That I may sleep, rocked on the people's fancy.
There was a song I used to love; sing that:—
There was a little man,
And he was clad in gray—

THERESA.

Break, tender heart, as broke the heart of iron—

THE COUNTESS.

A crystal, shattered by a brazen echo—

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

A harp-string, shattered by a battle-song—

THERESA.

A lily sinking silently on laurels.

THE DOCTOR.

My Lord is very ill. Stand more apart.

THERESA.

Farewell, François—!

THE ARCHDUCHESS.

Farewell, Franz!

THE COUNTESS.

Farewell, Bonaparte!

MARIA LOUISA.

Alas, his head grows heavy on my shoulder!

THE ARCHDUCHESS.
O Duke of Reichstadt!

THE COUNTESS.
King of Rome!

THERESA.
Poor child!

THE DUKE.
[*Deliriously.*]
The horses! horses!

THE PRELATE [WAGNER].
Let us fall to prayer!

THE DUKE.
Horses! that I may ride to meet my father!

MARIA LOUISA.
Will you not let me wipe away your tears?

THE DUKE.
No, for the Victories, my sisters—Lo!
I see them! see them! in a headlong flight
Draw nigh to lave their glory in my tears!

MARIA LOUISA.
What are you saying?

THE DUKE.
Nothing. Did I speak?
Hush! Father, that's our secret: yours and mine!—
My funeral will be ugly. Mumbling women;
Lackeys with torches; droning Capuchins;
And then they'll lock me in their crypt—and then—

MARIA LOUISA.
Tell me your sufferings, child!

THE DUKE.
Oh! Superhuman!—
And then, official mourning for six weeks.

THE COUNTESS.

He snatches at the cradle's lace, as if
To make a winding sheet—

THE DUKE.

It will be ugly—
I must remember how they christen better
In Paris than they bury in Vienna.
General Hartmann!

HARTMANN.

Prince!

THE DUKE.

Yes—while I wait
For death, I'll rock my childhood—

[*He hands* GENERAL HARTMANN *a book from under his pillow.*]

Here—

[GENERAL HARTMANN *takes the book. The* DUKE *falls to rocking the cradle.*]

I rock
My past—I rock my past—As though
The Duke of Reichstadt rocked the King of Rome.
General—I marked a place—

HARTMANN.

I see it.

THE DUKE.

Good. While I'm dying, read aloud—

MARIA LOUISA.

No, no!
You shall not die!

THE DUKE.

You may begin to read.

HARTMANN.

[*Standing at the foot of the bed and reading.*]
" Toward seven o'clock the Cavalry appear,
Forming the head of the procession—"

MARIA LOUISA.

[*Falling on her knees in a paroxysm of sobs.*]

Franz!

HARTMANN.

"The people, shaken with great sobs of joy,
Utter a shout:—'Long live the King of Rome!'—"

MARIA LOUISA.

Franz!

HARTMANN.

"And the guns salute; the Cardinal
Receives their Majesties, and so the pageant
Moves up the aisle as ancient rules prescribe.
The Ushers, Kings-at-Arms, their chief, the pages,
The various officers of the staff, the—"

[*Noticing that the* DUKE *has closed his eyes, he stops.*]

THE DUKE.

[*Opening his eyes.*]

Yes?

HARTMANN.

"The Chamberlains, the Prefects of the palace,
Ministers, Masters of the Horse—"

THE DUKE.

[*With failing voice.*]

Go on.

HARTMANN.

"Marshals of France, Grand Eagles; and Princess
Aldobrandini holds the chrisom-cloth;
The Countesses Vilain and de Beauvau
Bring in the ewer and the salt-cellar—"

THE DUKE.

[*Still paler and growing rigid.*]

Read on, sir. Mother—mother—lift me up.

[MARIA LOUISA, *assisted by the* PRELATE *and* DOCTOR MALFATTI, *raises him on his pillows.*]

HARTMANN.

"Then the Grand Duke, who took on this occasion
The Austrian Emperor's place as Sponsor: then
Queen Hortense, and the Imperial Godmother;
Lastly, the King of Rome, borne by Her Grace,
The Duchess of Montesquiou. His Majesty,
Whose healthy mien the crowd observed with joy,
Wore a great silver mantle, lined with ermine,
Whose train His Grace the Duke of Valmy bore.
Princes—"

THE DUKE.

Omit the Princes.

HARTMANN.

[*Turning over a page.*]

"Kings—"

THE DUKE.

Omit
The Kings. The end, sir; read the end—

HARTMANN.

[*Turning over several pages.*]

"And when—"

THE DUKE.

I cannot hear you. Louder.

DOCTOR MALFATTI.

[*To* WAGNER.]

The last agony.

HARTMANN.

[*Raising his voice.*]
"And when the Herald thrice within the choir
Had cried 'Long live the King of Rome!' before
They handed back the baby to its nurse,
The Emperor gently took it from—"
[*He hesitates, with a glance at* MARIA LOUISA.]

THE DUKE.

[*With infinite nobility and placing his hand with tender forgiveness on the head of* MARIA LOUISA, *who is kneeling at his side.*]

The Empress?

HARTMANN.

"And raised it to receive the acclamation.
The loud—"

THE DUKE.

[*Whose head drops.*]

Mamma!

MARIA LOUISA.

[*Throwing herself across his body.*]

François!

THE DUKE.

[*Opening his eyes.*]

Napoleon!

[*He sinks back.*]

HARTMANN.

"The loud *Te Deum* filled the sanctuary,
And all that night, throughout the realm of France,
With equal pomp, solemnity, and joy—"

DOCTOR MALFATTI.

[*Putting his hand on the* GENERAL'S *arm.*]

Dead!

[*Silence. The* GENERAL *closes the book.*]

METTERNICH.

Clothe him in his Austrian uniform.

CURTAIN.

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